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ABSTRACT

This publication contains 46 papers on self-study and improvement in institutions of higher education, particularly those institutions associated with the North Central Association of Colleges. The papers are grouped under six topic headings. The two papers in Chapter I, "Seeking Initial Affiliation with the Commission," describe experiences of representatives of institutions moving from candidacy to accreditation. Chapter II offers a significant number of papers on the role and responsibilities of the self-study coordinator from a wide variety of institutions. Chapter III, "Preparing for a Focused Evaluation," includes one institution's approach to an evaluation mandated by the Commission and another's preparation for an evaluation. Chapter IV, "Learning from the Present," includes a diverse array of papers addressing important current concerns, including applying principles of Total Quality Management to the development of institutional statements of vision, mission, and purposes; program planning and review; attrition and retention; general education; academic accountability for student athletes; a social justice model for higher education; developing leadership potential for women leaders; a cultural diversity plan; establishing an all-college senate; and building constructive relationships through bargaining. The papers in Chapter V, "Envisioning the Future," offer insights into programs involving computer conference courses and online education, distance learning by computer, community education through access cable television, and contractually offered courses. Chapter VI, "Using Assessment as the Bridge," includes papers describing innovative assessment strategies from a variety of institutions. (JB)

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A COLLECTION OF PAPERS ON SELF-STUDY AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

1993

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A COLLECTION OF PAPERS ON SELF-STUDY AND INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT 1993

Prepared for the program of the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
at the ninety-eighth Annual Meeting of the
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North Central Association of Colleges and Schools

COMMISSION ON INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

159 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

(312) 263-0456 (800) 621-7440

FAX: (312) 263-7462

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The papers included in this collection offer the viewpoints of their authors. The Commission highly recommends them for study and for the advice they contain, but none represent official Commission directions, rules, or policies.

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Contents

FOREWORD vii

I. SEEKING INITIAL AFFILIATION WITH THE COMMISSION 1

Candidacy as a Transformational Process
Marylou Butler and Robert D. Waterman 3

From Entry to Accreditation–A Guided Program for Development
Jasjit S. Minhas 8

II. THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SELF-STUDY COORDINATOR 11

The Self-Study as Process
Maureen L. Evans and Richard W. Stroede 13

Sleep When the Wind Blows: Development of the Self-Study Plan
Veldon L. Law and Pendleton Armistead 16

Getting Started the Wright Way!
Charles Hudson and Charles Guengerich 21

Elements for Self-Study Success
Judy Powers and Connie Shaw 24

How to Be "Inright, Outright, Upright, Downright Happy All the Time" While Preparing *the* Self-Study
Lisa Brandom 27

Conducting the Self-Study: Tips for the Novice Self-Study Coordinator
Brenda King 31

Self-Study Project Management Strategies: Turning Institutional Assessment into Actionable Outcomes
Brian Nedwek 36

Involving the Institution in the Self-Study Process
Gary Rankin and Annmarie Shirazi 40

The Mid-Plains Community College Area 1990-91 Self-Study Report: The NCA Suite and Its Writers
Ford Craig, Jan Ridnour, Gordon Koch, and William Hasemeyer 44

A Self-Study Report Case History
Robert J. Niedzielski 48

Second Thoughts
Mark A. Dombrowski 52

The Self-Study Report for a College in Transition: Reconciling the Pragmatic and the Ideal
David Chatham 55

Institutional Self-Study: The Integration of Data and Perception to Assess Strength and Weakness as a Foundation for Institutional Planning
Keith Striggow 58

The Continuing Role of the Self-Study Coordinator or "Is There Life After the Self-Study?"
Judy Armstrong 62

III. PREPARING FOR A FOCUSED EVALUATION 65

The Mandated Focused Evaluation
Michael J. Reich 67

Preparing for a Focused Evaluation for Institutional Change
Linda Sather 71

IV. LEARNING FROM THE PRESENT 75

The Self-Study Report and the Institution's Mission Statement
Gene Mueller 77

A Total Quality Management Approach to Developing and/or Revising the College's Mission, Purposes, and Vision
Carol Scarafiotti and Laura Helminski 81

Institutional Improvement Through Self-Study and Planning
James R. Faughn and Lloyd H. Hammonds 86

Program Planning and Review as Components of Assessment
Marianne E. Inman 90

Winning the Attrition/Retention Battle
Carl H. Hamilton and Michael G. Mitchell 94

General Education: The Perfect Curriculum Versus the Perfect Delivery System—Developing a G. E. Program
Sheldon H. Cohen 98

Care for Complex Interests: Faculty Fiduciary Responsibility for General Education
David Fisher 102

Academic Accountability for Student-Athletes: The Case for Disclosure
Jon Ericson 109

A Social Justice Model for Higher Education
Mary Jane Hitt 112

Women Leaders on College Campuses: Assessing the Developing Leadership Potential
Nancy C. Sederberg 116

A Cultural Diversity Plan
Kathryn Ballobin, Peter Rush, and Jan Wisialowski 121

A Senate is a Senate is a Senate...?
Daniel J. LaVista, Jean V. Kartje, M. Cheena Wade, Steven McCarthy, and Sally M. Ericson 128

Building Constructive Relationships Through Bargaining
R. Ernest Dear, Robert L. Bender, and Linda E. Flickinger 132

V. Envisioning the Future 135

The Rise of Computer Conferencing Courses and Online Education: Challenges for Accreditation and Assessment
Edward D. Garten and Terri Hedegaard 137

New Pathways–Distance Learning by Computer
Sandra Running and Claire McInerney 146

Academic Quality and Telecommunications Delivery
Barbara Audley and C. P. Sword 150

Connections for Community Education Through Access Cable Television
Paul E. Shumaker 156

Reaching Students Through Distance Education
Lynn Blakesley and Steve Zahn 161

Managing Contractually Offered Programs Effectively: An Important Market Opportunity
Douglas W. Steeples and Michael R. Sawdey 164

VI. Using Assessment as the Bridge 169

Descriptive Approaches to Assessment: Moving Beyond Meeting Requirements to Making a Difference
Karl L. Schilling and Karen Maitland Schilling 171

The Baldrige Award: Can it be Made to Fit Higher Education?
Dean L. Hubbard and Darrell W. Krueger 175

Outcomes Assessment in the Small College and the Survival of the African Elephant
Arthur R. Murdoch 179

The Model for Judging Educational Quality at Saint Norbert College–Does It Measure Up?
Sally Ann Brickner **186**

Assessment at the University of Arkansas: A Progress Report
Nancy Talburt **190**

Using Total Quality Leadership to Develop a Model to Measure the Accomplishment of Student Goals and Institutional Effectiveness
Dennis Ladwig **194**

Developing a Statewide Assessment Policy for Oklahoma
Joe Wiley **196**

Assessment: From Matriculation Through Post-Graduation–The Seminole Junior College Plan
Jack L. Medlock and Richard Leeper **199**

Total Quality Leadership and Participation at Rogers State College: A Development Model
Richard H. Mosier and James D. Hess **205**

Foreword

The Commission has again invited speakers for the Annual Meeting of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education to provide written materials related to their oral presentations. These papers are presented in *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement, 1993.*

This ninth publication of our Annual Meeting papers continues to meet the standard of excellence set in previous editions, with contributions from representatives from a broad spectrum of institutions of many types and degree levels and institutions at varied stages in their development. The writers show impressive understanding of critical issues facing their campuses, and they are generous in sharing what they have learned. The comments and views of the authors represent a wide range of opinions guaranteed to be stimulating and helpful to those engaged in institutional self-study and evaluation and those with general concerns about institutional improvement. I am impressed once again by the commitment of representatives of our member institutions to the work of the Commission, as exemplified by these papers.

Chapter I, Seeking Initial Affiliation with the Commission, describes experiences of representatives of institutions moving from candidacy to accreditation. Chapter II offers a significant number of papers on The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator from a wide variety of institutions. Chapter III, Preparing for a Focused Evaluation, includes one institution's approach to an evaluation mandated by the Commission and another's preparation for an evaluation focused on a request for approval of a proposed institutional change.

Chapter IV, Learning from the Present, includes a diverse array of papers addressing important current concerns, including applying Total Quality Management (TQM) to the development of institutional statements of vision, mission, and purposes; program planning and review; attrition and retention; general education; academic accountability for student athletes; a social justice model for higher education; developing leadership potential for women leaders; a cultural diversity plan; establishing an all-college senate; and building constructive relationships through bargaining. The papers in Chapter V, Envisioning the Future, offer insights into programs involving computer conference courses and online education, distance learning by computer, community education through access cable television, and contractually offered courses.

Chapter VI, Using Assessment as the Bridge, includes papers describing innovative assessment strategies from a variety of institutions. Several institutions report the incorporation of TQM into their efforts. One paper describes the development of a statewide assessment model.

As I read these papers, I was struck by the creative and effective efforts of individuals from so many institutions to use institutional self-study, evaluation, and assessment as a way to bring about genuine improvement in their institutions. You will find these papers varied and substantive, timely and instructive. This 1993 *Collection of Papers* demonstrates again why the *Collection* has become an invaluable resource to all who are engaged in institutional evaluation. What is most satisfying about these contributions is that they come from the Commission's membership and are based on direct experience in self-study and institutional improvement. These papers reinforce the characterization of the Commission as an "uncommon alliance" in which the representatives of our member institutions are significant teachers of the evaluation/accreditation process.

Because we have learned that previous collections have been useful to those not attending the Annual Meeting as a significant supplement to the *Handbook, Guide,* and *Manual,* the Commission will make this volume available by mail so long as the supply lasts. We invite those of you who use this collection as a part of your self-study and institutional improvement efforts to send us your comments about its value to you, and we welcome your suggestions for future topics for the publication and the Annual Meeting program.

Patricia A. Thrash
Executive Director
NCA Commission on Institutions of Higher Education

March 1, 1993

Chapter I

Seeking Initial Affiliation with the Commission

Candidacy as a Transformational Process

Marylou Butler
Robert D. Waterman

Introduction

Southwestern College is a private, non-profit, special-purpose, graduate level institution of higher education in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which offers MA programs in Counseling and Art Therapy. The College achieved candidacy for accreditation in February 1992 following an unsuccessful attempt in 1988-89. The challenge of turning failure into success required us to make a number of shifts in our perceptions of accreditation. We intentionally approached the second candidacy process as an opportunity to transform the institution rather than merely as a task to be completed for external approval. We also came to view accreditation as integral to the mission of the institution rather than adversarial; to value the process as much as the end result; and to view NCA staff, consultant-evaluators, and review committee members as colleagues rather than "gatekeepers."

In addition to making shifts in our mindset toward accreditation, it became clear that we would also want to utilize the transformational process on which the College's approach to education is based for the self-study endeavor. Specifically, Southwestern College is guided by an approach to education that is rooted in American transcendentalism as represented by Ralph Waldo Emerson and in progressive education as represented by John Dewey. The philosophical perspectives fostered by Emerson and Dewey have led to an educational impetus increasingly referred to in the literature as "transformational" or "transformative education" (Boyd and Meyers, 1988; Tierney, 1989). In terms of curriculum development, the transformational learning process is:

- ***person-centered*** in that it draws out the resources within the person to foster effective participation in the world as a professional;
- ***holistic*** in that it facilitates the development of all aspects of the person;
- ***experiential*** in that it teaches principles through an interweaving of theory and application and promotes knowledge *and* character development in the student;

- ***reflective*** in that it utilizes faculty who are "reflective practitioners" (Aronowitz and Giroux, 1985); that is, they must be active in applied settings, willing to share their experiences in the classroom, and able to teach the reflective process to students (Doerre, 1989).

The second candidacy process enabled the College to transform itself in numerous ways, including shifts in our understanding of our fit within the academic community; articulation of our mission and purposes so that others understand us; and strengthening of the College's organizational structure *and* resources to promote long-term health for the institution.

Areas of Transformation

Four areas of transformation were evident during and following the College's successful candidacy attempt: 1) leadership of the institution, including a reframing of the relationship between the Board of Directors and the President; 2) organizational development, including changes in management structure and style, and a deepening commitment to long-range planning; 3) clarity of the educational mission of the College, including decisions about degree programs, the student body we seek to attract, faculty to be recruited, and the ability of the library to provide access to materials; and 4) the College's relationship to the accreditation process.

1. **Leadership of the institution.** The shift from presidential to Board leadership of Southwestern College was one major area of internal transformation. It became evident that the institution needed to mature from the model of a founding president with considerable influence in decision-making in all areas of the life of the institution to one in which the Board of Directors assumes its role in the leadership of the institution by providing accountability for the Office of the President and has members who offer access to public resources and complement areas of inexperience within the organization. In building a Board of Directors that could oversee the institution, stimulate fiscal development, and represent the public interest, the institution added members with experience in the areas of legal affairs, fundraising and development, and program planning, for underrepresented groups, e.g., Native Americans.

2. **Organizational development.** The candidacy process has challenged Southwestern College to transform the internal organizational structure and management style so that it is more consistent with our educational philosophy and mission and purposes. We reviewed what we thought was a participatory management style and discovered that we were really using situational management and that the latter model was more appropriate for the size and nature of the institution.

   Second, it became evident that the College's degree of reliance on tuition as the primary fiscal resource supplemented by contributions was unrealistic and that a different balance of contributions and tuition was called for to provide the fiscal, physical, and human resources needed for the growth of the institution. We established a development office, hired a director of development, and committed human and fiscal support for fundraising and grant development.

Third, as a developing institution, we had been effective in meeting immediate challenges through personal sacrifice and crisis intervention. Implementing a more effective long-range planning process gave us an arena for gathering a diversity of viewpoints on what we could accomplish, the resources needed, and strategies for achieving a particular goal. A permanent planning committee has given us a way to involve a larger group of individuals in determining the future of the College. This has altered a pattern of insularity for decision-making and future planning. We value the long-range planning process for both the stability of the College and for achieving accreditation, and use our plan for institutional development as a guide for internal accountability and future direction.

3. **Educational mission and programs.** When it was clear that the first evaluation team could not understand our mission statement and educational philosophy and that the first review committee thought we were claiming to have developed our own model of psychology, we went to work on rewriting our philosophy of education and statement of mission and purposes. Through the completion of a thorough literature review and the assistance of an educational consultant with considerable experience with the NCA accreditation process, we were able to distinguish our philosophy of education from our statement of mission and purposes. We also identified our approach to the teaching and learning process, i.e., transformational education, as one that has growing acceptance in the professional literature and is a way of applying psychological and educational theories in the learning process. We realigned with Emerson and Dewey as foundational theorists for our philosophy and mission. We could then write philosophy of education and mission and purposes statements that "define the basic character of the institution ...and account for how the institution fits within the broader higher education community" (NCA, 1992).

   The candidacy process led to certain decisions about degree programs offered by Southwestern College. The College began as an upper-division and graduate-level institution offering a BA-completion program in Applied Psychology for individuals with two years of undergraduate work completed elsewhere. Once we understood the NCA General Institutional Requirements related to undergraduate education and examined the fiscal realities of the small enrollment in our BA-completion program, as well as the confusion about degree requirements for our BA- and MA- level students that was reflected back to us by the team, we decided to focus on doing what we do best. That has meant phasing out the BA-completion program and concentrating on the graduate-level education of counselors and art therapists with a focus on the character development of the student in the first year and preparation to meet the standards of professional associations in Counseling and Art Therapy in the second year. We changed the way we relate to the standards for training of these professional associations through discovering that, while we used these standards for curriculum development from the inception of our programs, we were not always consistent in actual practice. For example, we changed one degree program from Creative Expressive Therapy to Art Therapy so that our graduates' credentials could be perceived more clearly by the professional community. We also added coursework in specific areas so that our students would be prepared to meet changes in the demands made of them in various employment settings.

In examining the student body, we became more conscious of the kind of student we were attracting and developed ways to market and recruit students in order to foster the steady growth in enrollment that has occurred since the achievement of candidacy. We examined other institutions whose programs are aimed at the same kind of student, i.e., the adult learner. We became clearer about the aspect of higher education in which we are engaged, namely graduate-level, professional education for adult students who have a certain level of maturity and life experience.

In the area of faculty development, we have clarified the kind of professional educator we select, i.e., "reflective practitioners, ...with established reputations as clinicians and/or educators...with experience in applied settings, involvement in relevant professional associations...and willing to bring the benefit of their experience into the classroom" (SC Catalog, 1992, p. 58). We have continued to evaluate our commitment to defining faculty and administration as complementary activities by having several administrators engaged as core faculty. As the institution grows larger and more administrative demands arise, we will continue to seek a balance in the work assignments of those particular individuals. We have a plan for increasing certain core faculty positions to full-time during the candidacy period. The push from NCA for greater involvement by our faculty in academic governance and curriculum development has led to increased internal leadership by the faculty as a governing body.

The critique of the College's library during the first candidacy review led to a shift in emphasis from holdings to access. In the second review, we made a case for how we had strengthened access while *also* committing resources to holdings in the professional literature needed to support our applied programs. We have strengthened our commitment to the library with the appointment of a Library Director with considerable academic experience and a plan for the addition of library support staff during candidacy. The institution has become clearer about the central role of the library in successfully fulfilling its mission and purposes.

4. **Relationship to accreditation.** The College now sees accreditation as integral to the fulfillment of our vision rather than as an external hurdle. The candidacy process has strengthened our self-perception as an institution of higher education. Meetings with our NCA staff liaison and attendance at NCA Annual Meetings enabled us to clarify our relationship to our educational philosophy and mission and purposes. The experience with NCA has transformed our view of accreditation from an adversarial one to one in which we now assume that all persons engaged in the process have integrity, are sincere, and truly care about the evaluative process in higher education. We see that it is our responsibility to engage with and respond to whatever viewpoint is offered as we head toward accreditation. Less concerned with our uniqueness and specialness, we want to continue to clarify what we have to offer within the realm of higher education.

The challenge to Southwestern College in achieving candidacy for accreditation appears to be a microcosm for what higher education must address. Faced with the opportunity for transformation, the challenge becomes one of focusing institutional resources in a way that is efficient and flexible, yet responsive to the demands of diverse student bodies; preparing students for leadership in the world while maintaining character

development as the core of education; and confronting diversity and difference in a way that is expansive rather than divisive. The key for us is to return to the roots of our philosophy of education and mission and purposes as the reference points from which to change.

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***Marylou Butler** is Academic Vice President, Self-Study Coordinator, and a Core Faculty member at Southwestern College, Santa Fe, NM*

***Robert D. Waterman** is President and a core faculty member at Southwestern College, Santa Fe, NM*

From Entry to Accreditation– A Guided Program for Development

Jasjit S. Minhas

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (LCOOCC) is a tribally controlled college, located in the Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) Reservation, near Hayward, Wisconsin. LCOOCC is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. Average age of its students is 33; 68% of the student body is female and 82% are American Indian. Student enrollment for fall semester this year is 419.

The area within and surrounding the reservation is extremely rural. Most of the employment is seasonal. Poverty is a daily reality for reservation residents. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, 50% of the population living on the reservation lives below the poverty level.

LCOOCC is one of 26 tribally controlled colleges in the United States and is the only one of its kind in the state of Wisconsin. Its origin and mission are found in the tragic history of American Indians in the Hayward area. A tribal task force of educators and parents in 1982 conducted a needs analysis and a feasibility study. In August 1982, the LCO Tribal Governing Board charted the LCO Community College. The College had a staff of four individuals including the president and a secretary. Most teachers were volunteers who operated in a makeshift pole building of about 2,200 square feet area. The College struggled through numerous problems related to funding, students, faculty, policies and procedures. In 1986, the College applied for candidacy status with North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and in February 1993 accreditation was granted.

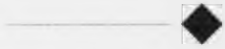
The six year's history, with the development of initial status study and subsequently three self studies (one every two years) is the time when this College in fact established itself as a reputable institution of higher education in this rural underdeveloped reservation. The North Central informational materials constantly served as the guidelines, and each of the four evaluation visits provided opportunities to mold and correct the course of the development to the appropriate direction. A good example can be found in LCOOCC's history of the mission statement. The original statement was developed by the founding fathers. It was revised four times in order to bring in clarity of purpose and coincide with the actual services

provided by the College. Each time, Tribal leaders, educators, administrators, students, and members of the community assembled in a retreat, discussed each line and wording in the mission statement, and took guidance from the advice of the evaluation team members. These statements were then revised and redeveloped to form the mission statement of the College. Everything else stemmed out of the mission statement. Similar procedures were used and reused to develop curriculum, faculty, staff, distance learning system, computers, computer labs, library with connection to other state and university libraries, and so forth. The five year development plan was finalized and implemented. As a result, the College saw very fast and controlled development that resulted in an increase in the size of the student body from FTE 64 in 1987 to FTE 417 in 1993; an increase in faculty and staff from four in 1987 to 47 in 1993; and growth in funding from under two hundred then, to more than two million dollars in the same period of time. The College has two four-year degree program arrangements with University of Wisconsin-Superior and University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and credit transfer agreements with more than a dozen area institutes.

The North Central process kept us on line. We developed our own objectives and implemented them. The process guided the College during difficult times and kept us all on track.

Jasjit S. Minhas *is President of Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College in Hayward, WI*

Chapter II



The Role and Responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator

The Self-Study as Process

Maureen L. Evans
Richard W. Stroede

As used in the accreditation cycle, the term "self-study" refers to both a process and a product. As the *Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation* (p.1) points out:

> The self-study process in accreditation serves two purposes: to provide the information necessary to determine that the institution meets the Commission's General Institutional Requirements and Criteria and to encourage institutional improvement.

This process culminates in a product, the Self-Study Report. While the Self-Study Report is a critical piece in the accreditation process, it is all too tempting to those involved to see the completed report as the final stage of the process. To succumb to that notion, however inviting it might be, is to condemn the institution to reinventing the wheel at the time of the next comprehensive visit.

What follows are some suggestions stemming from one institution's experience of trying to keep the focus on self-study as a process. These suggestions are offered using the format found in Chapter II of the *Guide*.

Initiating the Self-Study Process

As the *Guide* points out, the role of the Executive Officer of the institution is critical to the success of the effort. That person's clear message of institutional priority is needed to help focus the entire institution's efforts. From our experience we would add that it is equally necessary that the Executive Officer emphasize as well the notion of self-study as a continuous process interrupted from time to time for the production of a specific report. If at this juncture it is clear that the institution is initiating a self-study process rather than directing an existing process to focus on the preparation of a report, this needs to be added to the third step, Planning for the Self-Study. As the *Guide* (p.2) points out "the self-study for accreditation should flow naturally out of institutional self-evaluation and planning."

Appointing the Steering Committee

We would add to the *Guide's* suggestions regarding the selection of the Self-Study Coordinator, the notion of including that person on the institution's planning committee. We suggest this for two reasons: first, it is imperative that the Coordinator have the opportunity to keep the institution's planning committee well-informed of progress as well as any changes in direction, but second, the Coordinator needs to serve as the institution's "connecting link" in the planning process. In fact, it is our suggestion the role and function of the Self-Study Coordinator be a permanent responsibility of some member of the institution's planning committee. We believe that this would avoid the panic and anxiety that besets every steering committee.

Planning for the Self-Study

Again, we would add to the suggestions in the *Guide* the inclusion, if necessary, of an overall institutional approach to planning. The *Guide* points out the efficiencies to be gained by using existing planning processes, but we believe that in conducting such a survey an excellent opportunity is presented to focus institutional attention on overall planning.

Developing a Self-Study Plan

At this point the steering committee begins to focus on the final product, the Self-Study Report. To the *Guide's* invaluable suggestions we would add: propose a method for ensuring the continuation of data-gathering and analysis after completion of the Self-Study Report. If in fact one purpose of this process is "to encourage institutional improvement," then the self-study process must be continuous. Our experience this past year was typical. After the evaluation team left we breathed a collective sigh of relief and, appropriately, self-congratulation. Some months later we find ourselves still resting, still basking in the pleasant glow of a job well done. With each passing week it becomes harder and harder to recommit ourselves to that earlier level of energy and creativity in the ongoing process of institutional assessment.

Conducting the Self-Study

As the *Guide* points out, conducting the self-study varies considerably from institution to institution. Using existing committees where possible has clear advantages, but all institutions use at least some new committees or task forces. It is our belief that the existence of these "special" committees and functions (for example, the steering committee and the Self-Study Coordinator), create throughout the institution a sense of lack of permanence with respect to the self-study process. Clearly the preparation of the Self-Study Report requires a Coordinator and a steering committee; the task is to find a way to connect these to the product, not the process.

In summary, the elaborate although necessary structures we create in order to produce the Self-Study Report may be an impediment to institutional improvement through continuous self-study. Considerable vigilance is needed, we believe, to overcome that impediment. We suggest that one way to ensure continuity is by making the role of Self-Study Coordinator a permanent designation.

Maureen L. Evans *is Vice President for Academic Affairs at Defiance College in Defiance, OH*

Richard W. Stroede *is Associate Academic Dean at Defiance College in Defiance, OH*

Sleep When the Wind Blows: Development of the Self-Study Plan

Veldon L. Law
Pendleton Armistead

Introduction

In the 1930's, with work opportunities quite scarce, the owner of a western ranch was in need of a ranch hand to help operate his enterprise. As might be imagined the owner had considerable interest expressed in his vacancy. A number of cowboys were interviewed for the job. Questions about past experiences and references were asked of each of the prospective hands. In concluding each interview the owner provided each of the cowboys an opportunity to make a closing statement about their qualifications.

All but one of the closing declarations were about what the owner expected, positive and predictable. However, one cowboy's response took him completely by surprise and gave him cause to ponder the implications of the ranch hand's reply. The only assertion made was, "I can sleep when the wind blows." In spite of this strange closing statement the owner generally liked what he had seen and heard from this particular man; and the gentleman was hired to fill the vacancy.

Over the course of the summer and fall the hired-hand proved to be a diligent and loyal worker. One night in mid-fall an unexpected early winter storm hit the ranch. The ranch's owner was awakened by high winds to drifting snow, and blizzard conditions produced by one of the worse storms in recent memory. After quickly bundling up, the owner made his way out into the storm to get his ranch hand so that together they could secure the livestock and property.

Due to the adverse conditions the short trip across the yard to the bunk house was quite difficult. Upon arriving at the house the owner proceeded to pound on the door and yell at the top his voice as he tried to awake the sleeping ranch hand. All of the commotion was to no avail as he could not arouse the cowboy. Concluding that the cowboy could in fact "sleep when the wind blows" and was a heavy sleeper, and that his voice could not be heard above

the howling of the storm he proceeded on his own to make the rounds to check and secure his property.

It was not long before the owner finally realized what the cowboy had really meant when he said, "I can sleep when the wind blows." As the owner got to the corral he found that all of his cows had been rounded up and locked safely in the confines of the wooden enclosure. Upon arriving at the barn the owner discovered that all of his horses were safely in their stalls having been recently fed and watered. As he struggled to make his way around the rest of his property he learned that all was in order. The hired hand had been there ahead of him having planned for and anticipated all that needed to be done in order to avert the disaster that the storm would have caused.

The story, while somewhat trite, contains a significant message for those embarking on the self-study. Obviously, the correlation between the Self-Study Coordinator's role and that of the cowboy is self-evident. Little comparison needs to be drawn between the foresight and planning that occurred in the story, and the need for well conceived planning and anticipation to occur prior to launching the self-study process.

To the critical end of planning and anticipating obstacles that need to be overcome, the remainder of this paper will address the issue of developing the **Self-Study Plan.**

The Self-Study Plan

Most successful ventures include considerable and detailed planning. The efforts in setting the initial directions and parameters of the self-study should receive no less an effort. A document to spell out the purpose of the study and to guide its development is critical. A **Self-Study Plan** is a required NCA document and is to be submitted to NCA staff in advance of the actual study. With foresight, this document will function as a road map leading to the study's successful conclusion.

Pages five and six of *A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation* provide the minimum expectations of what the Self-Study Plan should include. These items are:

- identify the objectives of the self-study process;
- identify existing evaluation and planning processes and determine how best to integrate these into the self-study process and Commission evaluation;
- identify how the institution will report and respond to concerns expressed by previous NCA teams;
- formulate and implement committee structures consistent with the objectives;
- establish timetables;
- develop a preliminary outline of the Self-Study Report;
- propose the evaluation methodologies to be used to gather and analyze data and specify the data that must be gathered and analyzed;

- establish the reporting mechanisms—writing responsibilities—that will lead from data-gathering to the completed Self-Study Report.

The institution's plan should be developed in conjunction with, and based on experience, approved by a representative self-study steering committee as well as members of the institution's administrative team. Going beyond NCA's minimal expectations will enhance the plan's usefulness as a road map and guide for all who become a part of the inquiry. The Self-Study Plan should be as inclusive as possible so as to address the "nuts and bolts" of the development and process of the self-study. In this regard with preparation and planning, the Self-Study Coordinator and Steering Committee can anticipate and develop a plan of action that will avoid the development of critical and divisive issues.

In making the Self-Study Plan inclusive, the Coordinator could consider including informational items related to the institution, NCA, and the self-study process. Other broad topical items that would be of benefit as part of the plan are: editorial and report format guidelines to be followed by the various committees; special instructions and encouragement to the committees; institutional resources being devoted to the effort; coordinator, editor, and committee responsibilities.

Informational Resources

With comprehensive institutional involvement Self-Study Coordinators cannot expect all colleagues associated with the study to be as knowledgeable about and interested in the project as they will be. In this respect the clearer the Coordinator makes assignments, the better. Therefore, gathering together in one document all items that will be of value to all who work on the study will be of considerable assistance. Items such as NCA's General Institutional Requirements and Criteria for Accreditation, the institution's current Statement of Affiliation Status, and the titles and locations of institutional reports are items of which the typical committee member will have little or no knowledge. However, these items will aid them as they try to comprehend their role and task, and eventually begin analysis and evaluation of what they have discovered.

For committee members who get enthralled in literature and research, the inclusion of a thorough bibliography will keep them poring over the topic and process well into the preparation of the institution's next self-study. Those individuals concerned about institutional financial resources being devoted to the project will appreciate budget details outlining the amount of money, if any, each committee has to utilize. Further, budget details about the complete cost of the study and accreditation provide a historical benefit for future efforts.

Editorial and Report Format

Providing standards prior to the start of the study will contribute to a cohesive, well-written Self-Study Report. With all committees following the same organizational format and using similar writing styles the struggle to edit and organize the reams of committee materials into the final Report is greatly decreased.

Instructions relative to the writing style might include: the use of third-person point of view, use of active voice, positive writing tone (even when dealing with difficult issues), and documentation of research findings. Logistically speaking, abbreviations, page numbering, development of and listing of illustrations, items for the appendix, spacing, which word processing package to use are also meaningful considerations which, if defined early, will save countless hours at some later point.

Special Instructions to Committees

In the course of providing guidance to those participating in the study, the Self-Study Coordinator and steering committee will undoubtedly need to anticipate circumstances that the various committees will face that will be unique to their institution and effort. Special encouragement to the committees, details regarding the need to keep the written report evaluative in nature, how disputes over what to or not to include in the report will be handled, special policies and procedures that will be followed during the course of the research are all items that require attention. Specific instructions on the methodology to be used, how and who is to collect data (so as to avoid the duplication of committee effort, as well as duplication of surveys being sent to the same sample with similar questions), as well as the processes for data analysis are additional areas where uniform guidelines are beneficial.

Institutional Resources

In addition to direct financial resources spent on the study, each institution devotes considerable non-financial resources to the success of the effort. While virtually every item has a financial cost, those who toil in the trenches of the study need to be aware of the support that is available to them. Therefore, it is prudent to delineate how to obtain clerical support, where statistical analysis and support can be gained, how to secure graphic illustration assistance, and so forth. Information regarding printing the plan, report, and appendix should also be determined well in advance and communicated in the plan. This approach will allow for document-to-document continuity, as well as allow the committees to draw upon the expertise of a printer if one is to be available as an institutional resource.

Responsibilities

As suggested by NCA, the *Self-Study Plan* is the document where the complete committee structure and organization of the self-study is identified. Further, it is the text where the responsibilities of the various committees, the responsibilities of the individual committee members, the responsibilities of the Self-Study Coordinator and editor can be clarified. A clear understanding of task assignments and responsibilities for all of those immersed in the study will help to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts, and at the same time ensure that the institution receives a complete and thorough review. This is also the section of the plan that can again highlight the evaluative and introspective role of the committees.

Conclusion

The question remains, "Can you sleep when the wind blows?" Like the hired hand, chances are that if appropriate planning and anticipation have been completed prior to the onslaught of the storm, the evaluation team will verify that you have been there ahead of them and that all is in order. A comprehensive plan will guide the institution around the ranch so as to ensure that when the wind does blow, and it will, the Self-Study Coordinator and steering committee can feel comfortable catching forty winks.

Veldon L. Law is Dean of Instruction at John Wood Community College, Quincy, IL

Pendleton Armistead is Assistant to the President at John Wood Community College, Quincy, IL

Getting Started the Wright Way!

Charles Hudson
Charles Guengerich

The following describes the approach used by Wright College as it prepared for a fall 1991 accreditation visit. The authors recognize that since each member institution has its own unique characteristics that need to be considered as it pursues accreditation, each needs to develop its own process. We, however, learned a great deal from the experiences of others and from attending the self-study workshops. It is in this spirit of collegiality that we offer this outline.

In planning the Wright College self-study our college leadership recognized the need to involve the entire college community in the process, and to thoroughly examine all facets of our operations. Our goal was to leave no stone unturned as we sought to study critically every aspect of our college. To achieve this goal several key steps were identified as being necessary.

Identification of the Self-Study Coordinator

Clearly, the most important individual in the completion of the self-study is the Self-Study Coordinator. The individual chosen must have the support and respect of all college constituent groups. He/she must be a recognized leader at the college and have a history of involvement in a wide range of campus based activities.

We were also committed to making this a faculty rather than an administrative driven process. Faculty ownership ensured that participation levels would remain high and the accreditation process would lead to overall institutional improvement. The identification process began in January of 1989, two and one-half years before the actual accreditation visit, with key college administrators involved in the selection process.

To meet the above criteria Wright chose a faculty member with a twenty-year history of college leadership in various roles such as department chair, Faculty Council member, and

Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Self-Study Coordinator then attended the NCA Annual Meeting, familiarizing himself with the role and responsibilities related to this undertaking.

After appointing the Self-Study Coordinator and attending the 1989 NCA Annual Meeting, we developed a timetable and established the committee structure for the self-study during the summer of 1989.

Developing a Timetable

Working backwards from the proposed date for the accreditation visit of October 1991, a two year timetable was established. The first year was designed to collect data and to focus on a thorough study and revision of the College's mission statement. This year included meetings involving all constituents of the college community—community and program advisory councils, academic departments and committees, clerical staff and student groups. The result was a revision of our mission statement to reflect changes that had occurred since our last accreditation visit. This process culminated in the faculty's adoption of a revised mission statement, which was presented to our community in the fall of 1990.

The second year of work was devoted to assessing how well we were accomplishing our mission; in North Central Association terms, whether Wright was meeting the Criteria for Accreditation. During this year each of our seven committees focused on collating and analyzing data collected during the previous year and writing committee reports. These reports were submitted to the Self-Study Coordinator who revised, rewrote, and incorporated them into the body of the Self-Study Report.

An overview of the entire accreditation process was prepared for the fall 1989 faculty in-service week. At this time Wright's plan for the self-study process was shared with the entire college staff. The accreditation process was explained and questions were answered. Presidential leadership was a key component of starting the accreditation process with the importance of accurately evaluating our institution and implementing positive changes continually being stressed.

Committee Structure

Developing a committee structure and assigning tasks is another key ingredient in starting the self-study process. Wright did this using two key ingredients—the experience of others and the use of the expertise of a local NCA consultant-evaluator.

At the 1989 NCA Annual Meeting, hours were spent reviewing the committee structures used by similar institutions. Although no model was ideal, a wealth of information was obtained and a general outline evolved. The general outline was reviewed by an experienced consultant-evaluator who provided further input. From this we developed a committee structure that included membership from all constituencies.

Committee membership was established in the fall of 1989 during our annual faculty in-service week. Committee assignments were initially made on a voluntary basis with adjustments made to achieve broad representation within each committee.

Each committee was given a well defined task and a set of questions that it was to pursue as part of its evaluation of our institutional effectiveness. Administrators and department heads were instructed by the President to give committee requests top priority. Committees had the ability to develop and implement their own evaluation instruments or to use commercially available instruments. The overall process was overseen by a Steering Committee composed of committee chairs and chaired by the Self-Study Coordinator.

It should also be noted that standing committees continued to play important roles in the overall function of the college as well as in the self-study process. Our Academic Affairs Committee addressed the issues of academic standards and the faculty's development of assessment of student outcomes (Criterion Three) instruments during the self-study process. Our Strategic Planning Committee continued to map our future through long- and short-range planning.

As previously stated, the first year's work for each committee was data collection and mission review and revision. These data were used to submit final committee reports to the Self-Study Coordinator. These reports were due at the end of the fall 1990 term.

The above outlines our initial three step process to initiate the self-study process at our institution. The process continued with the review of committee reports by the Self-Study Coordinator and requests for revisions and additional data. Final committee reports were submitted to the Self-Study Coordinator for incorporation into the Self-Study Report in April of 1991. The initial draft of the Self-Study Report was complete in May of 1991; after editing, the final draft was completed by July 1, 1991. The remaining time before the evaluation team visit was spent in organizing our Resource Room and planning for our visit.

If we have anything further to offer it would be this:

> Allow for some flexibility. Things change and your process must be able to respond. For us, the change was the assessment requirement of Criterion Three. We responded by holding several institution-wide meetings on assessment and creating an assessment committee. These activities had only one focus: to develop and implement an assessment program to meet the requirements of Criterion Three. Since we allowed adequate time to complete the entire process, minimal delays occurred.

Enjoy the process! This can be a great time for an institution. We benefited from renewed collegiality and the vigorous exchange of ideas that occurred during the process. This strengthened our institution and the ties within it. That is what accreditation is all about!

***Charles Hudson** is Professor of Humanities at Wilbur Wright College, Chicago, IL*

***Charles Guengerich** is Dean of Instruction at Wilbur Wright College, Chicago, IL*

Elements for Self-Study Success

Judy Powers
Connie Shaw

Everyone realizes a self-study does not happen overnight . . . and sometimes it appears to be a large octopus . . . never quite "under wraps." The Self-Study Coordinator serves as a catalyst in the success of the self-study. Being aware of four preparatory activities is key to the catalyst's role.

Evaluate the Climate

The answers to several questions will help establish where to begin and with what activities as the institution begins its self-study.

- What is the accreditation history?
- Does the entire staff (support, management, and faculty) understand the importance of and the process for accreditation?
- How have the concerns from the previous self-study been addressed?
- What percentage of current staff was involved in previous accreditation processes?
- Are Board members knowledgeable of the accreditation process and the purpose?
- What was and is the CEO's role in the accreditation process?

The Self-Study Coordinator's answers to these questions will determine a starting point for awareness and knowledge. Commitment and responsibility to the self-study process should be felt by all staff and Board members.

Emphasize CEO Support

My suggestion is the CEO and the Self-Study Coordinator answer the climate questions together. The Coordinator can easily assess the CEO's perception of the process, the

commitment to the self-study, and the desired involvement the CEO wants. Required reading is "The Role of the CEO in the Self-Study Process," *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement, 1990* (pp. 171-176).

This early discussion begins the routine and continual communication between the CEO and the Coordinator that is necessary for a successful self-study. It is the discussion, debate, review, and planning that provide opportunity fo.

- favorable institutional climate;
- commitment of staff time, institutional dollars, and supportive roles;
- strategically addressing the improvement items;
- honesty.

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate

I have often said, "Writing a doctoral thesis one must please self and three on the committee, but writing a self-study one must please an entire staff." Therefore, communication is a top priority. Suggestions are as follows:

- announce the beginning of the self-study in weekly announcements, newsletters, school inservice, Board meetings, advisory committee minutes, internal TV screen;
- request volunteers for committee work (same vehicles);
- inform everyone of the committees, purpose, and names of committee members;
- give self-study updates periodically (strategically planned) at staff inservices, Board meetings, and institutional newsletters;
- distribute rough draft copies (know that there is a risk) to division and work areas of the institution;
- volunteer to give updates at divisional meetings;
- describe the self-study sequence of events;
- openly plan for the visit;
- publish the found strengths and the opportunities for continuous improvement;
- communicate with students, i.e., open forums, student government meetings;
- announce the evaluation team members (same vehicles as above);
- publish an executive summary to Board members, advisory members, Chamber of Commerce, community leaders;
- let the public know;

- **celebrate**—any and all outcomes;
- begin the planning process for the opportunities for continuous improvement (concerns);
- talk, talk, talk, talk, talk.

Be a Leader

- A coordinator must make decisions.
- The first three activities provide you with input, but someone must lead.
- The time line ...it is yours.
- The table of contents...it is yours.
- Taking risks...it is yours.
- Orchestrating...it is yours.
- Energizing, yourself and others...it is yours.
- Positivity...it is yours.
- A successful self-study...it is because of your leadership.

Reference

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. 1992. *A collection of papers on self-study and institutional improvement, 1992.* Chicago, IL: North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.

***Judy Powers** is Training Director for Health, Home Economics, and Human Services at Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, WI*

***Connie Shaw** is Basic Skills, English as a Second Language Instructor at Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, WI*

How to Be "Inright, Outright, Upright, Downright Happy All the Time" While Preparing *the* Self-Study

Lisa Brandom

One of the favorite songs that children love to sing as they are growing up is "I'm Inright, Outright, Upright, Downright Happy All the Time," always accompanied by the appropriate gestures. Serving for the first time as a Coordinator for *the* self-study might be viewed as a somewhat analogous situation—as we all strive to confront a similar number of emotions in the eighteen to twenty-four month period preceding the team visit. Indeed anyone who has worked on other projects of this length with a number of differing individuals can humorously trace the progression:

1. Wild enthusiasm
2. Confusion
3. Disillusionment
4. Chaos
5. Search for the guilty
6. Punishment of the innocent
7. Promotion of the non-participants

As a **happy** survivor of a recent self-study and team visit, I am going to open myself up to some of the emotions that I felt during this time, but I would also like to say: ***it does not necessarily have to be this way.*** With a lot of careful planning (while one is never *completely* free of all stress and anxiety regarding the visit's outcome), the process can be a success. It can even energize you as well as the institution. Here are some of the thoughts I had while participating in the project:

- **"Inright."** Being chosen to be the Self-Study Coordinator on your campus is certainly an honor. One does feel a sense of wild enthusiasm at the onset of being named to this responsibility. You tell yourself that you have been chosen because of any number of positive abilities that you possess: you have the ability to organize a task, take the steps necessary to accomplish it, and complete it within an appropriate time frame. You also believe you were chosen since you have some leadership skills, can maintain a sense of humor even in difficult circumstances, can motivate a group to produce, and possess some writing skills as well.

  Once the initial euphoria of your selection wears off, however, and the magnitude of the task ahead becomes apparent, you begin to feel some confusion about how to organize the project most effectively. Some tips that I have learned over the past couple of years include these:

  1. Consider a steering committee for the self-study that is already in place at your university and preferably one you have worked with for several years already. On our university, this was the admissions/financial aid committee. The advantages of already knowing your colleagues well through past committee work certainly enables you as Self-Study Coordinator to know their strengths and weaknesses for completing assigned tasks for data collection. You know those who are strong in editing skills, quantitative analysis, and interpersonal skills, and can make the best fit between task and individual.

  2. With your committee, make the decision about how the study will be organized. Will it center around the stated criteria, campus issues, or another form of organization? Do not be afraid to be creative as you make this selection. The evaluation team might be pleasantly surprised to find that you have organized your report around students, for example. Early on in our planning process, we realized that students provided the reason for our existence, and they truly are the center of our philosophy, resources, facilities, and assessment. A student worked with us on the steering committee throughout the preparation, and a student designed the cover of the Self-Study Report. In addition, students were encouraged to become involved in the process by submitting suggestions for the self-study content.

  3. In order that your colleagues will not be confused about what is happening in the self-study preparation, remember to maintain good communication with the campus community as a whole. On our campus, we chose to use fall faculty retreats, faculty meetings, and staff meetings as means for campus communication. Whenever possible we used appropriate analogies (beginning of football season to self-study kick-off) and humor in our presentations (a couple of minutes from *The Simpsons* cartoon and a David Letterman-like "Top 10" list of "What's Hot and What's Not When the Team Visits"). In addition, we used the campus newspaper, writing several articles in the months before the visit, to keep the campus issue before all constituencies.

  4. In order to minimize confusion for the tasks, consider using three key tools in your preparation for the team visit. We chose these aids in organizing: a strategy chart

(with students as our center of service) outlining the seven areas the self-study would focus upon, a task chart dividing the areas of data collection among the steering committee members and delineating all areas of responsibility, and a timeline setting appropriate goals for accomplishment preceding the arrival of the team in March of 1992.

5. Prepare carefully your institution's response to assessment. Since evaluation teams analyzed institutional responses to assessment for the first time in 1991-92, we were unsure as to whether we would be adequately prepared in this important area. Attending meetings where institutional effectiveness/assessment questions are addressed is vital to eliminate any confusion regarding the "what, how much, and how" questions that may arise.

- **"Outright."** Realistically, one of the emotions that you may feel as a Self-Study Coordinator (in addition to those mentioned above while you are "inright"—happily organizing the task ahead) is that of feeling a sense of isolation or loneliness. After all, as Coordinator (even though we know it is a team effort), it is hard not to feel the weight of a very heavy burden at times (an Atlas-like complex I suppose). The workload will be increased, though hopefully you will be (as I was) given released time to accomplish the project. You may feel the way you did when you were working on your dissertation some years back: the project is on your mind twenty-four hours a day. Having a friend or colleague, in addition to those on the steering committee, with whom you can bounce ideas off, complain, brainstorm, and revitalize is essential in keeping a healthy emotional balance. Tell yourself it is okay not to be perceived as Mr. or Ms. Superhuman at all times. It is all right to be human (though I am sure your friend or steering committee already knows that anyway). Even Superman dies these days. Give yourself some pep talks as well to maintain balance and perspective and, by all means, give yourself some breaks during the workweek.

- **"Upright."** Another emotion that you may have as Self-Study Coordinator is not being "Uptight" (like that described above) but rather being "Upright" in your sense of integrity and professionalism regarding your role. You are dealing with your campus in an important leadership position as you prepare for the team visit, and in the process, you find yourself becoming an "insider" to many campus issues of which you were previously unaware. Again you should endeavor to achieve a balance in communicating to the campus community, but at the same time you should always be aware of the sensitive nature of some of the information that will pass by your desk.

- **"Downright."** This emotion (being "down" or depressed at times as you prepare for the visit) is one that can be brought on by a number of factors, some of which may be real and some perhaps imagined. Sometimes you will find yourself sending out requests for data and hearing nothing from your committees but a long, heavy silence. If you are a person who actively strives to be on time and meet deadlines in your own personal career, this silence can be extremely frustrating. You can minimize this problem by keeping pleasant but at the same time keeping firm with colleagues and committees. Do not be hesitant in asking the assistance of your academic dean or president if request after request is ignored, however. Keep in mind that thorough preparation by you in a timely

fashion is the best key to a successful team visit. The emotion brought about by disillusionment does not have to materialize.

As the project draws to an end and the team visit is imminent, you realize that you have done your best to organize, plan, and prepare adequately. It is not likely that the last steps of the project (total chaos, search for the guilty, punishment of the innocent, and promotion of the non-participants) will ever take place. After all, that is just a joke, is it not? It *is* possible to be "Inright, Outright, Upright, Downright **Happy** All the Time" while preparing ***the*** self-study. It is even realistic that it will be so.

Lisa Brandom *is Associate Academic Dean at John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR*

Conducting the Self-Study: Tips for the Novice Self-Study Coordinator

Brenda King

As Self-Study Coordinator, you will be responsible for organizing your institution's self-study efforts. This includes developing and implementing a self-study plan, producing a document regarding your findings, and making arrangements for the evaluation team visit. While the uniqueness of each institution will cause each self-study process to vary, some general guidelines exist that will increase the likelihood of a successful endeavor. The following suggestions will be helpful as you prepare for and conduct the institutional self-study. Some of these suggestions flow out of our most recent self-study; others are insights gained from that experience. Careful planning and execution of the plan will help your process flow smoothly by providing direction and keeping you focused.

- **Learn as much as possible about NCA expectations as well as different approaches to the self-study process.** Take advantage of the NCA Annual Meeting to learn about the General Institutional Requirements and Criteria for Accreditation. Avail yourself of the Resource Room—peruse documents for ideas regarding how to conduct a self-study, helpful instruments, graphics, and writing styles. Do not limit yourself to institutions that are comparable to your own. While the issues addressed by varying types of institutions may differ, these documents present diverse ways of providing a common core of information. An examination of the documents may yield some specific guidelines or assist you in generating some creative approaches for your institution. Network with consultant-evaluators and other Self-Study Coordinators; they are repositories of information.

- **Carefully select your steering committee.** You should play a key role in determining the composition of the committee. Minimally, provide names of persons who are knowledgeable, dependable, trusted by the campus community, and with whom you can work well. Ideally, you should select the committee. You will need to work closely with each member; hence, you need people who work well with you.

  In selecting the committee, keep several things in mind: representativeness of the committee, expertise that each person would bring to the committee, and the individual's current workload and willingness to serve on the steering committee.

All segments of the campus community should be represented. A broad-based committee increases the likelihood that all facets of the institution will be examined, provides a variety of perspectives, and will help to build a consensus about the substantive issues to be investigated as well as the findings of the self-study. The Chairman of the Board, faculty representatives, the Controller, Registrar, and the Associate Dean of Men were members of our Steering Committee.

Representativeness also includes the length of the tenure with the institution. We attempted to have people on the committee who had been with the institution for a number of years, thus providing a historical perspective, and those who were relatively new to the institution and consequently brought a fresh perspective to the committee.

While representativeness ensures diverse perspectives, appoint persons whose primary commitment is to the institution, not to a particular area of operation/discipline. The goal of the committee is that of institutional improvement; avoid turfism at all costs.

As you formulate your committee, you need to determine the types of expertise you will need. For example, do you need someone who has expertise in developing and analyzing research instruments? If you have an institutional research office that can provide this type of assistance, it is not as important to have someone with a strong research background on the steering committee. Regardless of whom you choose, you will need people who are capable of leading small groups, who have good writing skills (particularly if the subcommittee chairpersons will be responsible for writing the final report for the self-study document), and who can work independently on the tasks that they have been assigned.

When considering potential steering committee members, you should also assess the person's current workload and desire to serve on the committee. Guard against the tendency to select the "over-committed" individual: the faculty or staff member who is already on a number of demanding committees. While such people are chosen because of their reputation for diligence, your self-study process can get bogged down because a committee member has too many responsibilities. He/she will concentrate on the more pressing demands and possibly not give the self-study the careful attention it needs. You should also determine the level of interest in or willingness to serve. Disinterested persons do not serve the committee well and often impede progress. Ask for a commitment from the individuals who will comprise your committee.

- **Have a clear understanding of the parameters within which the steering committee will operate.** Understand the expectations for your committee—what you can and cannot do. Discuss this with the Chief Executive Officer. It is also important that the Chief Executive Officer communicate the committee's responsibility to members of the total campus community and encourage their cooperation with the self-study process. Our President presented a Charge to the Steering Committee during a College and Seminary chapel, when most members of the campus community—students, faculty, and staff—were present. This informed the campus community about the self-study—what it involves, its benefit to the institution, and the importance of having total campus involvement. As a result, the committee gained credibility and its work was made easier.

- **Know your institution.** Institutional dynamics will have an impact on your self-study process as well as the results. Know who the power-brokers are. Seek their input and support on a regular basis. Failure to do so will decrease your committee's effectiveness. Know what the important issues/challenges are. Prior to developing the self-study plan, we conducted faculty input surveys and focused interviews with different segments of the campus. We solicited respondents' perceptions regarding the institution's performance on the NCA Criteria for Accreditation. We also asked them to articulate the institution's mission, its strengths and weaknesses, and issues they wanted addressed in the self-study process. Their responses helped us in formulating the self-study plan.

  Your committee will look to you for guidance. Unless members of the steering committee have attended the NCA Annual Meeting—which is highly recommended—they will expect you to tell them what needs to be done and how best to accomplish it. Be prepared to share different approaches to the self-study, and let your group help determine the specific approach your institution will take.

- **Devise a self-study plan.** Careful planning and execution of the plan will help your process flow smoothly by providing direction and keeping you focused. NCA has delineated the essential elements of the plan in *A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation.* Carefully review it and the other NCA materials provided. If members of your steering committee attend the Annual Meeting, they will have personal copies of these materials. If not, provide each member with copies and urge them to read the material. Discuss it and provide other information that you think would be helpful.

  In formulating the plan, determine how the Self-Study Report will be compiled. Will each committee write a section of the Report, or will one person be responsible for writing the document? If each subcommittee chair will be responsible for writing a chapter for the final document, it would be helpful to have the Self-Study Report in both hard copy and on the computer system. Decide in advance the software, version, and font your committee members will use. Format should also be predetermined. In our case, individuals mailed documents to an NCA Self-Study file and forwarded hard copies to the Self-Study Coordinator. The Coordinator reworked the material to provide a consistent tone and writing style.

  If the subcommittees will report their findings to one person who is responsible for writing the document, it would be helpful for the writer to be a member of the Steering Committee and be a part of some of the subcommittee meetings to ensure familiarity with the overall process, the issues discussed in the Report, and the thinking of the subcommittees. Once the document is written, someone with excellent writing and editing skills should work closely with the Self-Study Coordinator to produce the final document.

  After the plan is developed, submit it to your NCA liaison and ask for his/her input. We asked our liaison to come to the campus after we submitted the self-study plan. He addressed the faculty and staff and used the remainder of the day to discuss the self-study plan with members of the steering committee. His input and direction were quite valuable.

- **Make sure the necessary resources are provided.** Resources include time, finances, materials, and personnel. Determine what will be needed—if possible, talk to the previous Self-Study Coordinator at your institution; ask other Self-Study Coordinators about resources needed to conduct their self-studies. Make sure you and your committee members have the time to perform your responsibilities: this may mean a reduced teaching load or exemption from other committee responsibilities. Develop a budget—consider expenses for training, ordering and processing research instruments, and acquisition of other resources (e.g., self-study documents from other institutions, helpful journals and monographs, printing, and clerical support). If clerical support is not available within the institution, be certain that temporary clerical support will be available once you begin writing drafts of the document. Anticipate your needs—What kind of assistance will you need? When will you need it? This is particularly important if you are depending upon someone who is employed by the institution. You want to be sure that the person your institution designates as clerical support will be available when you need him/her. If the production of your final document coincides with an extremely busy time for that person, you may not meet your deadlines.

- **Complete your Basic Institutional Data Forms (BIDs) early in the process.** Most of the BIDs request information for three years, the year in which the evaluation visit is conducted and two years prior to that. Request the available information from the appropriate persons, and update the forms each year. Provide members of the steering committee with the data from the BIDs. They can use the information for their reports. When we first asked that the BIDs be completed, we requested information for the previous two years. This provided us with some longitudinal data that were helpful during the self-study process.

- **Prepare your institution for the evaluation visit.** People may be anxious about the team visit. You can ease their concerns by informing them of the date of the visit, the identity of the consultant-evaluators, and the purpose of the visit. Allay any fears about the "ominous they" by reminding them that the consultant-evaluators are not antagonists. Suggest that they are visiting the campus both to offer their expertise and to confirm your self-study findings. Encourage your institution to avail itself of their expertise.

  In preparation for the visit, we placed copies of the Self-Study Report on reserve in the library and talked to staff members and student leaders about the visit. We discussed the purpose of the visit, questions that might be asked, the exit session, and NCA procedures after the visit. We also encouraged them to be open and honest, cooperative and friendly.

- **Commit yourself to honesty and a positive attitude.** The self-study process provides an opportunity for institutional introspection. The Commission expects your Self-Study Report to be an honest reflection of your institution. Do not try to conceal your weaknesses. By the same token, do not become disillusioned by them. You can easily become discouraged by the institution's problems and lose sight of its strengths and, as a result, become overly critical. You can avoid this by reminding yourself that no institution is perfect and by keeping the purpose of the self-study in perspective. The self-

study should help your institution recognize its problems and begin to consider means of correcting them. If this is accomplished, the self-study process will have been a successful one.

Brenda King *is Associate Professor of Sociology at Grand Rapids Baptist College and Seminary, Grand Rapids, MI*

Self-Study Project Management Strategies: Turning Institutional Assessment into Actionable Outcomes

Brian Nedwek

Perspective

St. Louis University is a multi-campus, urban Jesuit institution with an enrollment approaching 12,000 students. The University offers five associate, 37 undergraduate, and 38 graduate and professional degree programs through 11 schools and colleges. It began its self-study in 1990, nearly two years before the actual site visit in April 1992. Several tasks were outlined that required an inventory of current data sets as well as data collection and information management practices. The Office of Institutional Planning and Research (OIPR) had designed and implemented a method to select, capture, and analyze university-wide institutional data. This method produced a volume entitled, "Planning Reference Guide," an annual compendium of institutional data with a ten-year planning horizon. These data were fitted to the information needs of the Basic Institutional Data requirements. Other data collection strategies involved the review of existing individual school self-study reports, ad-hoc studies, the 1982 Self-Study and Team Reports, and several sample survey methodologies and instruments.

The organization of the self-study included a 25 member oversight Steering Committee and 10 task groups whose primary function was to develop the initial drafts of appropriate sections of the Self-Study Report. The project was managed by the University's Associate Provost. A three volume set of information was produced. Volume One contains the core description and assessment of the institution. Volume Two includes a variety of technical appendices that range from the Basic Institutional Data forms and survey instruments to data tables. Volume Three is the 1991-92 edition of the University's Planning Reference Guide. In addition, a 26 page executive summary was distributed to the Board of Trustees.

The University sought to accomplish several goals through the self-study process. First, the effort was to provide the information data base for the evaluation team. Second, the

University viewed this effort as an opportunity to examine carefully its mission and direction and the extent to which the various academic and support units are contributing to the realization of that mission.

A third goal was to create a climate for institutional reflection that would enable the University to chart its course into the next century. In the two years prior to the self-study, the University had undertaken the traditional strategic planning initiatives, including the preparation and dissemination of a "Plan for the 1990's." The self-study was designed to complement the work already underway. As part of preparing the University to respond to the challenges of the next century, the self-study was intended to reinforced the importance of long-range planning and the essential contributions that an institutional data base can make.

Because the self-study required the participation of multiple units in the University, several levels of participation were intended to promote further integration of the University community. The self-study sought to foster efficacious involvement of the entire University from the selection of steering committee and task subcommittee members to data gathering from faculty, students, and staff.

Implications for Self-Study Coordinators and Institutional Researchers

Reaccreditation activity has several implications for Self-Study Coordinators and institutional researchers. First, it is very helpful to have an Office of Institutional Planning and Research (OIPR) or its functional equivalent reporting directly to the Self-Study Coordinator. Access to existing standard and ad-hoc reports or modification of existing reports is readily accomplished when the institutional research office is staff to the project.

Second, the Coordinator is as much an ambassador as lead researcher. The process of self-study is an unsettling intrusion among academic managers who fail to see the usefulness of the exercise. Limited cooperation, failure to meet deadlines, and the unwillingness to provide accurate and complete data sets are strong signals of disinterest, if not outright distrust of the Self-Study Coordinator or senior management. The power of the Self-Study Coordinator is best described as highly situational and based upon the ability to persuade more than the ability to apply sanctions.

Third, the project has limited potential to effect changes in the institution if the resources are inadequate to conduct the full study. From released time for staff and database management support to the effective use of an editor, adequate resources must be budgeted.

Fourth, the organizational position of the Self-Study Coordinator can influence the quality of the study and its potential to effect institutional change. Levels of cooperation in information production are affected by where institutional research and project management are located within the organization (Taylor, 1990).

Reaccreditation activity has several implications for institutional researchers, whether or not they assume the roles of project manager, Self-Study Coordinator, or both. First, the

researcher's perspective on a self-study project influences the potential effect of the reaccreditation effort on the institution (Field and McDonald, 1991). The situation is analogous to that of the prisoner who peers through the cell's window, i.e., one sees stars, while another sees only mud. Reaccreditation can be transformed from a ritual into a meaningful exercise that furthers institutional excellence. For a self-study to move beyond mere symbolism, senior management needs to maintain a high profile for the self-study effort, and, more important, how systematic institutional assessment will either become or remain an integral component of how the University is managed.

From this more proactive point of view, the role of the institutional researcher is expanded to include that of an anthropologist. The researcher has the opportunity to explore competing meanings of basic terms such as "academic success" and has an obligation to bring alternative perspectives before the key stakeholders in the institution. Although the literature of higher education draws analytic distinctions among research, recommending policy, and monitoring environments (Gill and Saunders, 1992), effective self-studies force an integration of the traditional roles assumed by institutional researchers, policy analysts, and strategic planners.

Institutional researchers underestimate the need to engage in anthropological investigation as an essential component of information building. The challenge for researcher and coordinator alike, is a "matter of defining one's role not as a chronicler but as a lively facilitator and interpreter of the communal process of self-discovery and self evaluation" (Gould, 1992, p. 49). Self-studies show that from the selection and capture of data through agenda-building activity, the quality of information is a function of cultural sensitivity and awareness (Nedwek and Neal, 1992).

A second implication for institutional researchers is that they recognize the self-study process as an opportunity to create and sustain involvement on the part of many actors in the academic community. Involvement in the self-study is political participation. Thus, it is imperative that committees are reflective of diversity within the institution; that channels of communication are continuously monitored for blockages; that alternative points of view and interpretation are provided fair treatment; and that a consensus is achieved on the basic findings and policy recommendations.

Consensus-building on the final draft is critically important to the potential for effective implementation of the findings from the Team Report (Dooley and Murray, 1990). Equally important, the involvement of a wide range of faculty and staff in the assessment component is an important lesson for anyone engaged in student outcome measurement (Ewell, 1985).

Third, institutional researchers must be prepared to deal with the enormous disparity in the readiness of academic units to understand and embrace even the most basic elements of outcome assessment processes. This University's self-study had shown not only the diversity of meanings that academic assessment has for faculty, chairs, and senior managers, but the strong emotional potential that lies beneath "performance" measurement. When outcome assessment is viewed as a component of quality review and institutional effectiveness measurement, institutional researchers may be underprepared to handle the complexities of measurement issues, e.g., psychometric properties, durability of effect, internal validity, and the like. Similarly, the introduction of resource measures that tap financial capacity and

attempt to link them directly to outcomes is conceptually difficult. Institutional effectiveness measurement may create the need for extensive retraining of existing institutional research staff that will enable them to address systematically these newer approaches.

Finally, institutional researchers must recognize the inherent contradiction between the forces for a steady, slow process of internal review with that of the demands by external agencies for quick results (Ewell, 1987). Assessment of the institution, especially building evidence in support of demonstrated competencies of its graduates, is a lengthy process. The state agency demands for "evidence" of institutional effectiveness, coupled with the expectations of accreditation bodies, create considerable pressure on the offices of institutional research to embrace outcome measures that are based more on data availability than on the authenticity of the assessment.

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***Brian Nedwek** is Associate Provost at Saint Louis University in St. Louis, MO*

Involving the Institution in the Self-Study Process

Gary Rankin
Annmarie Shirazi

Purpose of Self-Study

The purpose of Oklahoma City Community College's self-study was to evaluate the College mission, resources, accomplishments, and plans, and to receive continued accreditation. To accomplish this purpose, the College assessed changes since the last North Central visit and examined the major components of the College in relationship to the accomplishment of the College's purposes and goals.

A major objective of the self-study process was to involve as many individuals from the College and the community as possible. A second objective was to obtain data to confirm publicly that the purposes and goals of Oklahoma City Community College are of acceptable quality. The College is currently utilizing this information to improve programs and services.

Organization of the Self-Study

As indicated by the North Central Association, there is no single way to organize the Self-Study Report. Some institutions organize the Self-Study around the North Central Criteria for Accreditation. Others organize around the institution's planning process. Some focus on a major issue facing the institution, while others focus on the major departments of the institution.

Oklahoma City Community College used two strategies. The first was to present the Self-Study Report in a format that would conform to the Criteria used by the evaluation team (keep this in mind, they have to read the document). The second was to avoid, as much as possible, interruption of the existing organizational structure. If an organizational structure is already in place to plan, assess, or evaluate, why duplicate efforts?

Involvement of the Institution and the Community

- **Self-Study Coordinator.** The Vice President for Planning was designated by the College President to coordinate the self-study and to chair the Self-Study Committee.

- **Self-Study Committee.** The Self-Study Committee was composed of nineteen faculty, staff, and administrators. An objective of assigning individuals to the Committee was to have representation from each of the four academic divisions and to include managers from each of the major areas of the College. The role of the Self-Study Committee was to recommend the organization of the Self-Study Report, the number of subcommittees, the composition of the subcommittees, and the chair of the subcommittees. In addition, the Self-Study Committee monitored the progress of each subcommittee.

- **Self-Study Subcommittees.** Although the Self-Study Report was organized around the Criteria for Accreditation, the subcommittees were organized around the major areas of the College—University Parallel; Technical/Occupational, Continuing Education and Business Development, and Cooperative Education; Academic Support Services; Human Resources; Student Services; Institutional Development, Marketing, and Research; Financial Resources, Physical Plant, Auxiliary Services, and Institutional Support; Institutional Planning; and Assessment.

  The chair of each of these nine subcommittees was a College employee who worked in an area other than the one being evaluated. Four of the chairs were faculty and four were mid-managers. The Self-Study Committee recommended keeping the subcommittees small, six to eight members. Even with small subcommittees, more than 100 individuals, including College staff, students, and community members, were involved in the process.

- **Community Advisory Committee.** As part of the College planning process and to provide input for the self-study, a twenty-member Community Advisory Committee was established. Membership consisted of civic leaders, small business owners, public school administrators, hospital directors, and Chamber of Commerce members.

  The major purpose of the Community Advisory Committee was to validate that College goals and objectives were relevant. A secondary focus was to make the Committee aware of the North Central evaluation process.

- **Executive Committee.** Although not part of the self-study plan, an Executive Committee, made up of the Self-Study Coordinator, the Director of Institutional Research, and the Composer/Editor, was created during the writing process. For no reason other than the moral support they provided to each other, this was a valuable team. Other benefits included general editing, organization of the subcommittee reports, and a broader perspective of accomplishing institutional goals.

Editing the Document

Each subcommittee report was developed by collecting information from a specific area of the College. This information provided an overview of the area being reviewed by:

1. identifying how the area fit into the overall college mission;
2. evaluating information on how well the area was meeting its goals; and
3. listing strengths, weaknesses, and recommendations for improvement of the area.

The subcommittee report consolidated information concerning a number of areas into a single document. The first drafts of these consolidated reports were received by the Executive Committee in mid-January. The Composer/Editor then began the process of editing. Many subcommittee reports were as long as the Self-Study Report; therefore, only the essential components could be used. The subcommittee reports served as backup documentation for recommendations made in the final Self-Study and were included as part of the information in the resource area. Having three individuals (the Executive Committee) to assist in determining what should be left in and what should be edited out was a tremendous help.

Preparing for the Team Visit

The self-study process is dynamic; it continues long after the Self-Study Report is published and sent to the evaluation team. Therefore, the initial stages in preparing for the visit are to determine what changes have occurred since the Self-Study Report was completed so that they may be presented to the team members at the beginning of their visit.

In addition to changes made since the document was developed, there is also much backup information that needs to be readily available to the team. Therefore, a resource area should be provided that contains each subcommittee report and up-to-date information on assessment activities, enrollment, budget, personnel, etc. The resource area should also provide work stations, computers, a lounge area, and anything else specifically requested by the team.

As the team is developed, be sure to pay attention to the resume of each member, know his/her areas of expertise, and plan accordingly. Be in constant contact with the Chair to determine the logistics of the visit including hotel accommodations, transportation, desired meetings, etc. Each team is different. You may recommend, but be sure to listen to how they want the visit to proceed.

Managing the Visit

In your communications, the Chair will have indicated how he/she perceives the visit will progress. Be sure that everything is set up as requested prior to the team's arrival. Identify one or two individuals on your campus who can be contacted at any time to help team members set up meetings, provide transportation, or just answer procedural questions. When on campus, allow the team members as much freedom as they desire, but always have someone available to respond to requests or questions. We tried not to overwhelm the team, but invited the Self-Study Committee and subcommittee chairs to attend the initial orientation meeting and the final exit session. For us, this was successful. Again, be sure all meetings or receptions are acceptable to the team.

The Results

The results far exceeded our expectations. What we did not tell you was that in the middle of our self-study, our President resigned and the Executive Vice President was appointed President. Anxiety mounted, but with the help of the North Central staff member (use this person) and the involvement of the total institution, we made it. Remember, one or two people cannot do it. Involve as many individuals as possible. Good luck.

Gary Rankin *is Vice President for Administrative Services and Planning at Oklahoma City Community College, Oklahoma City, OK*

Annmarie Shirazi *is Dean of Institutional Research and Planning at Oklahoma City Community College, Oklahoma City, OK*

The Mid-Plains Community College Area 1990-91 Self-Study Report: The NCA Suite and Its Writers

Ford Craig
Jan Ridnour
Gordon Koch
William Hasemeyer

The self-study process for Mid-Plains Community College Area (MPCCA) began during the 1989-90 year. As a point of information, MPCCA is a public institution serving an eighteen county area in west-central and southwest Nebraska. A multi-campus institution, MPCCA consists of colleges at McCook (Community College) and North Platte (Mid-Plains Community College - with its two separate campus locations, Voc-tech and McDonald-Belton). Through its colleges, MPCCA offers a comprehensive program of transfer, occupational, and community education.

During the 1989-90 academic year, a steering committee was appointed. One especially important feature in the formation of the steering committee was the naming of an NCA campus coordinator for each of the MPCCA institutions in addition to an overall Self-Study Coordinator. Thus, during the first year of the study, it was the Self-Study Coordinator, the three campus coordinators, and other members of the steering committee (seventeen members in all) who developed the self-study plan and guided foundational procedures and processes. Among such activities were the following: 1) gathering input from all segments of the institution through the conducting and writing of mini-self-study reports by nearly all faculty and administrative units; 2) developing a structured pattern of information flow; 3) creating linkages from campus level study committees to Area study committees; and 4) providing for representation from each campus study committee on the overall self-study steering committee.

Using the information gathered throughout the 1989-90 year, the Self-Study Coordinator wrote the first two chapters of the *MPCCA Self-Study* during the fall of 1990. As a campus

NCA coordinator from McCook Community College, I (Ford Craig) edited, during November and December of 1990, these early chapters in preparation for general steering committee review; the writing process was indeed underway.

However, by early February of 1991, it became apparent that the overall Self-Study Coordinator (who was also the writer) could not complete the writing of the remaining chapters due to unfortunate circumstances of health. At that time, I accepted the responsibility of guiding and completing the self-study document and the final stages of the process up to the time of the visit. The other two campus NCA coordinators, Janis Ridnour and Gordon Koch, also accepted significantly increased responsibilities. Of particular help during this transitional period, MPCCA Area President William Hasemeyer, secured a few precious months of additional time before the final document was to be completed. Thus, from mid-February of 1991 through early August, the writing of the middle and concluding chapters of the *MPCCA Self-Study* commenced as a group endeavor.

The NCA Suite and the Writing Process

In a recent conversation, I asked Jan Ridnour and Gordon Koch (mentioned above) to recall what they perceived to be important aspects/procedures/processes that facilitated the work during the final critical months of the writing effort.

Jan began her comments by placing emphasis on the value of having a large room in which to write—our own NCA Suite:

> The Self-Study Writing Team Suite was a large room on the third floor of the Area office building. Being sequestered from campus interruption with no telephones ringing was a blessing. A secretary on the first floor took messages for the team and interruptions were allowed only for emergencies. Each writer had one or two large tables for resource materials, computer, printer, coffee cups, and so on. One end of the room was covered with a chalkboard revealing the report outline that became more detailed as each section of each chapter developed. This was a phenomenal visual aid to motivate the team to adhere to deadlines.

In addition to these observations, Jan also cited several other key conditions and processes, including the following:

1. Some released time was granted and responsibilities shifted as the self-study became the number one priority.
2. A new and very tight timeline was established.
3. A secretary was assigned to the writing team with her task being the entering of sections of the study as they were completed. She would then provide working copies and more editing would take place.
4. The writing team held a short "staff meeting" two or three times each week to make group decisions about the entire writing process—who was to write what, who

would edit and therefore create a uniform style, who would work with graphs and charts, and so on.

5. Nearly all of the necessary documentary and support materials were housed within the NCA Suite. Academic unit and Area-level self-studies (those written during the first year of the study) were organized in portable hanging files. Results of ACT surveys, the Higher Education Research Institute Survey, and numerous other external reports were labeled and arranged on two large tables. All of these materials were later moved to a Resource Room established for the evaluation team.

6. As sections of the Self-Study Report were completed, they were presented to the steering committee for review and commentary. To the extent possible, suggestions for improvement of the Self-Study Report made by steering committee members were incorporated.

7. When the writing was completed, the computer disks were given to another secretary who selected print type, left space for graphics, determined page breaks, and improved the general appearance. The final document was printed in-house.

To these insights by Jan, Gordon Koch (who was in charge of graphs, pictures, and charts) added:

> A report should be interesting for all the employees of an institution to read and to look at. This means that the report should appeal to diversified interests and be easy to visualize. "A picture is worth a thousand words" is still true, and with modern computer software—pictures, graphs, and tables are now easier than ever to place in a document. An institution's success depends upon all its employees, and everyone should benefit from reading the Self-Study Report if it is to be an effective tool for improvement.

Gordon concluded his remarks by stating, "Comments from the administration, teachers, and staff were all positive with reference to their reading of the document. Many said it was educational and some even said it was entertaining."

Insofar as the actual writing process is concerned, I would add that 1) there must be **one** writer/editor who makes certain that the "voice" (including point-of-view, diction, syntax, and paragraphing) of the Report is reasonably consistent throughout; and 2) it is important early in the process to establish a precise coding/numbering system for documents, graphs, charts, and tables. Without such a system, chaos will surely occur.

Summary Remarks

In looking back over our self-study process in its entirety, Area President (now Chancellor) William Hasemeyer offered these thoughts:

1. The appointment of a) strong and supportive campus coordinators, b) enthusiastic and dedicated steering committee members, and c) a Self-Study Coordinator with

strong organizational skills and excellent writing ability ultimately led to a very good *MPCCA Self-Study Report.*

2. The involvement of most of the faculty, administration, and staff provided a wide range of data, information, and opinion. Because of this wide range of involvement, the final document was an Area study and not just the work of the Self-Study Coordinator.

3. *Since nearly all of the Area people felt some ownership of the document, there were* good feelings about the Self-Study Report.

4. A Self-Study Report like ours was intended to be (and is) a document to assist with ongoing administrative decision-making. Along these lines, the self-study process clarified the kinds data and information that needed to be regularly collected and documented.

5. For our Area, the development and writing of the MPCCA Self-Study Report was a very positive experience, and it should be for other institutions of higher education as well.

Ford Craig *is Institutional Research and Assessment and Professor of English-Philosophy at Mid-Plains Community College Area, North Platte, NE*

Janis Ridnour *is Business Instructor at Mid-Plains Community College Area, North Platte, NE*

Gordon Koch *is Electronics Instructor at Mid-Plains Community College Area, North Platte, NE*

William Hasemeyer *is Chancellor at Mid-Plains Community College Area, North Platte, NE*

A Self-Study Report Case History

Robert J. Niedzielski

Two years ago I attended my first North Central Association Annual Meeting, not entirely certain of the task that lay before me. Not long after I had assumed my present position the previous September, I had been asked to serve as the Self-Study Coordinator for the institution. There was no detailed book of instructions to follow. Most of the top administration at the University was new, the coordinator of the previous self-study had a few years earlier gone on to another position elsewhere, and most of his committee members had retired.

Last year at this time the evaluation team visit had been completed, the exit session went very well, and the University was subsequently granted continued accreditation. The entire process was an excellent learning experience for me, and I have found the Self-Study Report to be a useful reference source on several occasions since then. Permit me to share with you the process that we went through in preparing the Self-Study Report.

At the outset, I certainly had available a copy of our previous accreditation Self-Study Report, and the separate departmental/unit reports on which it was based were located in the University archives. Copies of self-studies of three other institutions had also been obtained, and I left the North Central Annual Meeting with two more. I found all of that information in general helpful, but our own Self-Study Report was unique, because our situation was unique, and yours will be too. You have your own purposes, organization, and programs. You can get some general ideas from other sources, but your Report has to be your own.

In addition to its staff, who you should not hesitate to contact for advice when the need arises, the North Central Association has a number of documents that are extremely helpful. These include: *Accreditation of Postsecondary Institutions: An Overview; A Handbook of Accreditation; A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation; A Manual for the Evaluation Visit;* and *A Collection of Papers on Self-Study and Institutional Improvement.* While you will not find detailed "how to" instructions in any of these, and rightly so because of your unique character, you will find the general principles around which to build your Report, and, in the last publication noted above, many useful ideas from others who have just gone through the process. Read the North Central documents carefully and consult them often. I recommend that you seriously consider supplying each of your steering or coordinating committee

members with at least a copy of the *Guide*. I found the *Guide* useful throughout the process, but particularly in its initial stage, and the *Manual* very helpful as we prepared for the visit. Among its resource listings, the *Guide* includes a number of selected Self-Study Reports available from institutions of various sizes and types.

Just prior to the start of preparation for the self-study, The University of Toledo community had been engaged for more than a year in a strategic academic planning exercise. It was wide-ranging and involved every segment of the community. Faculty, administration, staff and students, and implementation committees were just beginning to address many of the points that had been made. Add to this the fact that several colleges either had just previously undergone accreditation review, or would, shortly after North Central, and there was understandably a reluctance in many quarters of the University for yet another self-study.

For North Central review, University units were encouraged to build on any and all of the reports noted above, to update them, rather than to reinvent the wheel. It was also our intent to incorporate the Strategic Academic Plan in the self-study, particularly with respect to Criteria Three and Four.

A set of questions was generated for the departmental/unit self-studies to respond to. Those questions dealt with the unit history, goals, objectives, administrative structure, major accomplishments, and changes over the past ten years, and challenges overcome during the past five years and anticipated over the next five years. There were questions that dealt with human resources, including faculty, staff, and students, fiscal and physical resources, and the curriculum. Each unit was asked finally to summarize its strengths and weaknesses, future plans, and any external recognition and/or accreditation. The units were also asked to submit a collection of data, such as faculty vitae, departmental documents pertaining to its governance and committee structure, grant funding, brochures and newsletters, and accreditation reports, for example.

Ideas for the specific questions came from a variety of sources. The previous Self-Study Report provided some examples, as did the several Self-Study Reports from other institutions mentioned earlier. The *Guide* was also very helpful in formulating questions, devised in light of comments made in it in the discussion of the four Criteria that the Report would have to address. Before the set of questions was sent to the separate units in the University for use, it was reviewed by our North Central Association Coordinating Committee.

The twenty-person Coordinating Committee, which I chaired, had representation from every area of the University, and it was drawn in large measure from the Strategic Academic Plan Steering Committee. It included faculty, administrators, classified and unclassified staff, and undergraduate and graduate students. Although personnel from the area of Academic Affairs predominated, the offices of the Vice President for Graduate Studies, Research and Economic Development, and the Vice President for Student Affairs were also involved. The committee oversaw the process, acted as a sounding board, and reviewed the Self-Study Report on a regular basis as it was being prepared.

Early in the process, I had met with various groups in the University, to give them some idea of what would be expected of them, and to ask their members to make sure their calendars

were clear for the scheduled team visit dates, even though those dates were more than a year away. (It is a good idea to remind people regularly about those dates throughout the year preceding the evaluation visit.) Among those groups were the Executive Staff, the Council of Deans, and the Graduate Council, the last a Graduate School advisory committee made up of faculty, administrators, and graduate students.

The Self-Study Report was organized into twelve chapters, each dealing with a separate area of the University. The Criteria for Accreditation, while not specifically noted in the body of the Report, were alluded to throughout. It was in the last chapter, "Request for Reaccreditation," that material in the Report was specifically linked to the Criteria.

After an introductory chapter that adhered to the guidelines prescribed by North Central, and that addressed concerns raised during the last accreditation visit, came chapters devoted to the University mission, undergraduate education, graduate education, research and outreach, faculty, students, library and computer resources, facilities and equipment, fiscal support, and athletics, in that order. The chapter on undergraduate education presented a broad overview of programs, college by college, and not detailed descriptions or requirements, since both North Central and the evaluation team members had a copy of the University catalog at their disposal. The last chapter, as already noted, addressed the Criteria for Accreditation and the General Institutional Requirements.

Five appendices concluded the Report. The first of these dealt with the questions used and the data requested for the unit self-studies, while the second gave the coordinating committee membership. This was followed by the strategic plan, titled "The University of Toledo 2000," then the Strategic Academic Task Force Assignments, and, last but not least, the Basic Institutional Data Forms. Those data forms had been distributed to the various offices responsible for the information early in the process to give them ample time to gather that material. The current data were then plugged in as they became available. As the Report was finalized, data presented in its body were compared with data given on the Data Forms, where applicable, to ensure that there was agreement in those two cases.

The chapters were not written in the order they appeared in the final Report. Those on the mission and on athletics were among the first completed, for example, while that on fiscal resources was the last, aside from the Report's final chapter. The financial situation in the state at the time was poor, with recisions being threatened on a regular basis, so that, when the Report was finally completed, the fiscal resources chapter was as up-to-date as possible.

As I finished writing a handful of chapters, they were made available to the University community for review. Drafts of all of the material were submitted for review to the President, the Vice Presidents and other members of the Executive Staff, the Academic Affairs staff, deans, and department chairs. The Chair of the Faculty Senate and the President of The University of Toledo Chapter of the American Association of University Professors were also provided copies, and copies were made available in the Faculty Senate office. Memos were sent to the entire University community, faculty and staff, informing them of this distribution of the draft materials and soliciting their review. Several persons subsequently requested copies for examination and/or review. As noted earlier, the Coordinating Committee also met on a regular basis to discuss the report material. The AAUP President

was specifically included in the mailings because the AAUP had in the spring of 1991 appeared to have prevailed in a collective bargaining election, although the contested ballots were not resolved in AAUP's favor until one year later.

The feedback provided from the reviews of the self-study drafts was invaluable. At times conflicting suggestions from different offices about certain material were troublesome, but these could be resolved by discussion, consultation, or by rechecking the facts in some cases. Some individuals took exception to interpretations that were presented in certain areas, but those problems were generally cleared up after we had a discussion about how the Report was to be evaluative, and not simply descriptive.

The final draft was also circulated for review as described above. The importance of making that material available for review campus-wide cannot be overemphasized. You may have as I, because of my length of service on the faculty, a good sense of the history of the institution, and you may have carefully read and taken notes from each unit self-study, but mistakes can be made, items overlooked, and/or a bias may creep in. Criticism from as wide an audience as possible is necessary and good.

So now the Self-Study Report was finished, but that, of course, did not complete the process. You cannot really coast from here on out, but a good portion of your task is behind you at this point. Of course while the Report is being finalized, preparation for the evaluation visit is under way. The Report itself must be carefully proofread, more than once, and ample time for its printing must be available, not only to be sure it is distributed to the North Central office and to the evaluation team members by the prescribed deadlines, but to anticipate last-minute glitches that are sure to arise as well.

The comments presented herein may not apply in your situation. They simply represent a process that worked for us, and at least may give you something to think about, as you prepare your Report in anticipation of a successful North Central accreditation process.

Robert J. Niedzielski *is Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs-Programs and Professor of Chemistry at The University of Toledo, Toledo, OH*

Second Thoughts

Mark A. Dombrowski

A thorough institutional self-evaluation cannot be satisfactorily achieved quickly; a time-frame between eighteen and twenty-four months should be projected. For institutions that are midway in the process, the self-study committee (with student representation) should have been named and it should be operational. The methods of data collection for the report and institutional data forms should have been identified, and the basic framework for the report should be established.

While the Self-Study Coordinator is questioning how this is all going to come together, he or she (together with the self-study committee) has an opportunity to step back and assess the entire project.

The purpose of the self-study should be reexamined. The self-study should be more than an academic exercise for purposes of reaccreditation; it should serve the college or university being evaluated. At Siena Heights College, our evaluation came at the very end of a five-year planning cycle. We wanted the Self-Study Report to serve as the basis for a new planning effort. This intent was reflected in the data we gathered from programs (i.e., departments), divisions, and other units of the college.

The time frame for the self-study should also be reviewed and modified as necessary. Is the time frame realistic? What else needs to be done to complete the self-study? What are the weaknesses in the process that need to be adjusted? Give yourself sufficient lead time; project the Report's completion at least thirty days before it must be sent to the NCA office and the members of the evaluation team. This is particularly true if the timeline conflicts with breaks, vacations, or other events that disrupt the schedule.

Other considerations and/or tips include:

- **Involvement.** A Self-Study Report that has broad based community involvement has greater institutional ownership than one that was written in the back office of an administrative suite. Be sure to explain the process to key support staff and to student government. Initial drafts of our Report were shared with all members of the self-study committee; additions and corrections were collated before a draft was

circulated to the community at large. Forums for faculty, staff, and students were conducted to receive feedback.

The self-study committee walks a delicate line between honest evaluation and placing the institution in its most favorable light for reaccreditation; feedback will make the Report more realistic.

- **Deadlines.** The adherence to deadlines for reports from academic and support units is critical. The failure of one, two, or three individuals to submit their self-evaluations on schedule results in partial drafts that necessitate additional drafts and duplication of efforts. The powers of the Academic Dean or Academic Vice-President might need to be employed with the laggards.

- **Final Report.** When the data have been gathered and the preliminary drafts written and critiqued, it is advisable to establish a subcommittee of the self-study group as a writing committee to finalize the Report. Our subcommittee consisted of the Academic Dean/Provost, one Assistant Dean, and the Self-Study Coordinator, each of whom assumed responsibility for final work on an appropriate section of the report. A fourth member from the English faculty edited the entire document for consistency in language and style.

- **Word Processing.** Institutions with E-mail and voice mail are encouraged to make effective use of this technology to expedite the self-study. When resources in colleges and universities are notoriously slim, printing costs continue to soar. It is possible to produce a Self-Study Report with existing in-house technology. Early in the self-study process, someone with superior word processing skills should be identified and assigned responsibility for coordinating word processing functions for the Report. This individual will be an essential player in the successful completion of the Report. Institutional data forms can be folded into the document and word processing index functions employed. Our evaluation team appreciated the selected index at the end of our Report.

- **Report Production.** Self-Study Reports tend to be lengthy documents; if a better grade of bond paper is secured, it can be reproduced on both sides to reduce its bulk (and save a tree). Order binding and cover materials well in advance of final duplication. Estimate the number of copies that will be required for distribution to all segments of the college community and then add at least twenty-five copies (or five percent) to that number. The extra copies will undoubtedly be requested and archival copies must be retained for future use. It is much less expensive to do a single printing run. Someone needs to proof the duplicated copies and their collation to correct unforeseen errors.

- **Liaison.** Evaluation team members are called consultant-evaluators because they serve dual functions. To some extent, the same can be said for North Central Association staff. Do not expect this professional staff to hold your hand through each and every minor crisis in the self-study process; maintain appropriate contact with your staff liaison and use his or her expertise when it is most needed. Our staff liaison critiqued the near final draft of our report and provided valuable feedback at a critical point in the process.

- **Local Arrangements.** With justification, consultant-evaluators resist visits that are orchestrated before their arrival on campus. However, some arrangements will necessarily be made in advance. Meetings with Boards of Trustees and/or alumni who are not readily available on site need to be scheduled; the chairperson of the evaluation team should notify the institution of the team's wishes in this regard. Visits to off-campus or extension centers will also need to be prescheduled, especially if those sites are primarily weekend or evening programs. Visits may have to be extended beyond the usual two and a half days to encompass such centers.

- **On-Site Documentation.** In addition to the Self-Study Report and college catalogs, which are mailed to the evaluation team before the visit, a great quantity of material needs to be examined during the visit. Current course syllabi and minutes of meetings from all administrative groups, college committees, faculty governance bodies, and student senate should be available in the team's work room. Additional copies of college catalogs and brochures, audit reports, survey details, and extended self-study narratives should be included. Resumes and personnel files need to be updated and included; clerical staff should anticipate requests for this information.

Documents that relate to the institution's legal status should be retrieved from the college vault for examination. Other documents from the financial aid office, the business office, and the registrar's office should be available as requested. Include basic office supplies and, if possible, a computer in the work room as well.

Team Visit Narrative. It is common practice for an institution's administrative officers to receive a verbal summary and recommendations from the evaluation team before their departure from campus. A draft of the written Team Report is typically sent to the institution prior to final submission. As a final step in the evaluation process, the institution is authorized to communicate errors *in fact* to the team chair so that the final report accurately reflects the status of the institution. I would caution against making numerous minor adjustments in the Team Report; concentrate on major errors of fact. Is the organizational structure of the college accurately reflected in the report? The financial status? The continued viability of the college? Disagreements with reaccreditation, evaluation, or recommendations are best dealt with later in the review process.

Mark A. Dombrowski is Director of Instructional Services at Siena Heights College, Adrian, MI

The Self-Study Report for a College in Transition: Reconciling the Pragmatic and the Ideal

David Chatham

While our colleges evolve continuously, we occasionally enter a period of transition marked by change to our mission and institutional purposes. These can become awkward and prolonged stages of development. So it was that Western State College of Colorado had undertaken fundamental changes that remained far from complete when we were called upon to conduct self-study for continued accreditation once again.

Perhaps you can think back to an early meeting of your self-study steering committee in which you discussed, as did we, your individual aspirations for the task before you. I would suspect that you heard a range of ideas similar to those expressed in our group. At one extreme we had the pragmatists, who emphasized the need to gain continued accreditation. The idealists defined the other extreme as revealing the degree of progress made toward fulfilling the new mission of the college and generating widespread commitment to accomplish what remained to be done. In our case, I believe that the idealists dominated the discussion.

Our steering committee thus planned for a self-study that would offer significant potential benefit to our college in transition. Members of the campus community in various stages of awareness of, and support for, the new mission and purposes of the institution would have a mandate to reflect on the new direction that had been set, the means identified to pursue it, the progress made, and the priorities for further development, with regard to each operational area. We decided therefore to establish task forces that would provide a maximum number of our colleagues with the opportunity to participate directly in this process. By broadly stimulating such reflection, our self-study might enlighten and unite the campus community as much as it assessed our institutional progress.

When the task force reports came back, our optimism appeared to have been misplaced. The reports failed, in general, to acknowledge the college mission or institutional purposes as

reference points. The prevailing theme in an otherwise disparate collection was admirable achievement despite the urgent need for additional resources. The task force reports were written from a paradigm we had hoped to leave behind. As the steering committee compiled and edited the reports, the need to gain continued accreditation suddenly took on overriding importance. Anxiety threatened to dissipate idealism; pragmatism took the floor.

By working intuitively, with invaluable assistance from two additional editors, our steering committee eventually produced a respectable Self-Study Report that reconciled the ideal and pragmatic. I believe that we discovered in the process some ways to proceed that your steering committee might wish to consider should you find yourselves in a situation similar to ours.

- **Distinguish the objectives and goal for the Self-Study Report from those for the self-study process.** The primary objective of our self-study process was to assess the state of the college, with the goal of furthering achievement of our new institutional purposes. We determined that the primary objective of the Self-Study Report was to gain the continued accreditation that we felt was deserved, with the goal of eliciting support from the evaluation team to successfully complete the transition currently underway.

- **Detach yourselves from the task force reports.** We were hoping that the task force reports could be compiled with minimal editing to produce an acceptable first draft of the final Report. That hope proved difficult to give up and led us to spend too much time and effort trying to salvage them. The task force reports provided us with valuable information about the state of the institution in relation to its purposes. But much of that information was implicit in significant omissions and irrelevant inclusions, with the result that several sections of the final Report were written from scratch.

- **Reconsider the choice of principal author.** If you decide that the final Report must diverge significantly from the task force reports, you will benefit from a principal author with several critical characteristics. Of course the person must write well, with insight and integrity. She or he must clearly understand the new mission and purposes of the college as well as the underlying rationale, and sense what will be required of the college community to accomplish them. An ability to enlist various college employees on short notice to gather documents or facts, or even to write or revise sections of the Report, will be required. The person must be prepared to devote primary attention to the Report for the next several months. Finally, the principal author in these circumstances must be able to establish a confidential and candid relationship with the steering committee. It might be best, in fact, if she or he is a member of the steering committee, as our principal author turned out to be. If the person originally designated as principal author lacks any of these characteristics, gracefully recruit the person you need.

- **Recruit an editor who understands and supports the new mission and purposes of the college, works well with the principal author, and is willing to do substantial writing, too.** Let the editor and principal author improvise their working

relationship for this project. We found that their roles eventually overlapped, and that one of the most important contributions of the editor turned out to be the discussions in which he joined with the principal author.

- **Recruit a third person to compile the appendices.** This ends up involving more work than you might anticipate. Our Self-Study Coordinator took on this responsibility, finding that it provided a valuable additional way for her to stay closely involved with production of the final Report.

- **Schedule regular meetings for the steering committee with the principal author.** While the process of writing the final Report will involve extensive discovery and clarification under these circumstances, the standard of truth must be what the steering committee has learned of the institution. The steering committee must ensure that the final Report remains consonant with its findings, and the principal author must ensure that the steering committee endorses the Report. We made good use of these meetings to reach agreement about the focus and tenor of the Report, as well as the interpretation and treatment of key issues.

- **Consider if the Self-Study Report, while necessarily being grounded in the findings of self-study, can legitimately emphasize future prospects of the institution.** Our steering committee and principal author agreed that the college had made limited progress toward achieving its purposes in the several years since being challenged with a new mission. But we also concluded that recent developments provided a promising foundation for significant additional progress in the next several years. Our final Report, therefore, candidly assessed the present in the context of the institution's future. This proved to be the approach that reconciled the pragmatic and ideal.

David Chatham *is Director of Library Services at Western State College of Colorado, Gunnison, CO*

Institutional Self-Study: The Integration of Data and Perception to Assess Strength and Weakness as a Foundation for Institutional Planning

Keith Striggow

Institutional strategic planning typically begins with some assessment of internal strengths and weaknesses. In the planning argot, this SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) establishes the foundation for the construction of institutional strategies.

Given the typical written response from an evaluation team of North Central Association consultant-evaluators, which ends with a listing of the institutional strengths and weaknesses that the team believes deserving of the most focused attention over the next period of accreditation, the Self-Study Report itself can logically be viewed as an opportunity to anticipate the response of an evaluation team by putting the institution's own view of critical strengths and weaknesses before the members of its community. A self-study developed in this manner can subsequently be matched with the perceptions of the evaluation team to give some perspective on institutional self-delusion and/or the perceptual limitations of the evaluation team.

A further support for this model of self-study would come from the institutional outcomes that should flow from the self-study and team visit processes, namely the effective revision of institutional plans from the new perspectives furnished through the mechanism of the Self-Study and Team Reports. If the self-study document is viewed as the internal compilation of significant strengths and weaknesses, to be revised in accord with the perceptions of the external consultant-evaluators, the completion of the evaluation process will have established a solid SWOT foundation for institutional planning. Alternative designs for the Self-

Study Report, particularly those that include a completed institutional plan, run the risk of requiring significant revision of the institutional plan once the written perceptions of the team have been submitted, or conveying the message that the perceptions of the consultant-evaluators are an insignificant ingredient in the formulation of an effective institutional plan.

Self-Study as Convergence of Fact and Interpretation

Given at least two different ways to describe any institution, through its vital statistics or through the eyes of its various constituents, the merger of these two views, factual and interpretive, seems essential if any comprehensive picture of the institution is to be generated from the self-study process. Ideally, the factual view of the self-study process would provide perspective on the trends and accomplishments of the concluding period of accreditation through the array of both institutionally significant data and the statistical information obtained through completion of the North Central Association's Basic Institutional Data Forms. From the interpretive view of the process, a systematic effort to collect and compile the perceptions of institutional constituents that includes the involvement of administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents, employers, high school counselors, and trustees should provide a reasonably balanced overview on both the points of congruence and dissonance among the widely diverse perceptions of these institutional constituents. At least one device for capturing such diverse perceptions would be a questionnaire or survey study using a format like that provided in the *Small College Goals Inventory*, which allows respondents to discriminate between perceptions of what the institution "should be" and what the institution "is."

If the self-study process is to have a positive impact upon the ongoing life of the institution, the central constituents of the organization must have a sense of ownership in the translation of the factual and interpretive information collected. While one can debate exactly which constituents are "central" in any institution, certainly a minimal definition would include faculty, staff, and administration with compelling arguments available for including both students and trustees. However an institution defines this "central" group, it is the membership of that core constituency that must process and translate what has been collected and compiled.

There is probably even more variation between institutions on the issue of their division into organizational units and structures than there is on the question of central constituency, but, whatever the structure, the assignment of a self-study working group to each organizational unit of the institution, with a group membership that represents each of the central constituencies, should lead to a reasonably balanced interpretation of the self-study information. Such division into working groups that can "specialize" on each unit of the institution's operation should provide a greater depth of analysis on each of the institution's organizational units, at the probable cost of the time needed for this committee process to establish, function, and produce. Given a time-frame of six to nine months however, the advantage of generating the self-study interpretations through such a committee process are significant, including the production of a self-study draft by committee chairs that represents diverse units of organization as well as variable perspectives on an overall interpretive view of the institution.

From Fact and Interpretation to Strength and Weakness

Once the self-study working group assigned to an organizational unit of the institution has begun to sort through the statistical and perceptual information relevant to its functional area, it would be helpful, given the need to eventually merge these various group efforts into one harmonized document, to establish some standard format or outline for the report to be generated by the group. One such standard "chapter" outline might be:

- Capsule history of this area of institutional activity prior to the last accreditation visit.
- Analytical history of institutional activity and progress in this area since the last accreditation visit.
- Summary of those institutional programs in this area that would benefit from further development during the next period of accreditation and those programs in this area that will serve the institution well by simply being maintained.

The use of such an outline in each chapter or area of the Self-Study Report sets the scene for an eventual priority ranking of those institutional programs whose development is most essential in the near future, as well as a priority ranking of those programs that have the best prospects for continued effective function.

The need to eventually harmonize the various chapter reports into one self-study document typically represents a significant challenge to the final editor who must try to faithfully transmit the perceptual tone struck in each of the individual chapter reports while merging them into a unified picture of the whole institution. Selecting the best person to act as this final editor of the Self-Study Report is an important and challenging decision, as this final editor must have credibility and respect in the eyes of several of the central constituencies of the institution. There is also some functional utility in having the same person who edits the final document serve as the coordinator of the self-study process itself, and such a combined position certainly merits the dedicated time and attention of a key member of the institution's staff.

The self-study process described above should yield a relatively detailed analysis of each organizational unit of the institution written in a reasonably standard format. Each of these "chapter" reports should include an assessment of the key strengths and weaknesses of the programs in that organizational area of the institution's activity, setting the scene for a summary overview of institutional strengths and weaknesses based on a priority ranking of those listed in the various area reports. The Self-Study Report editor must then create the insti–tutional summary while editing the individual area reports into a standard format and tone.

Beyond the simple creation of a summary chapter; however, the self-study editor also must match the information generated in the report with the North Central Association's General Institutional Requirements and the Criteria for Accreditation. Certainly, each institution will have its own preference of a final Self-Study Report format, but one way of addressing the need for both a summary chapter and a careful analysis of institutional compliance with North

Central Requirements and Criteria is to use the beginning, introductory chapter as the institutional summary of what the reader will discover later in the report and then use the final chapter as an analysis of the institution's performance and programs against the General Institutional Requirements and Criteria for Accreditation.

Presumed Advantages of this Self-Study Model

While the advantages of parallelism between the self-study and strategic planning processes of an institution are reasonably obvious, as is the efficacy of using the time and energy expended in the self-study process as the opportunity to conduct the actual SWOT analysis, what is less obvious is the advantage of delaying construction of the strategic plan until after the completion of the full self-study and team visit processes. But all three advantages of delaying construction of the full plan can be tied to the significant insight into institutional processes that should result from the team visit. First, it is simply more efficient to construct the final plan after all of the significant information is in front of the planners. Second, planning is always enhanced by the widest possible sampling of perspective and expertise, which is exactly what the evaluation team brings to a campus visit. And third, the time necessary to conduct a careful self-study that involves even most of the constituencies of an organization seems to fall somewhere between eighteen and twenty-four months (at least it has in our institution), and the time to shape the SWOT results from such a self-study into a strategic plan, particularly if most of those same constituencies are to be involved, is in the range of another nine to twelve months. The conservation of time, energy, and consultant resources to be gained by using the self-study as the SWOT segment of a strategic planning process and delaying the generation of the strategic plan until after the team visit would then appear to be significant.

***Keith Striggow** is Dean of the College at Lakeland College in Sheboygan, Wisconsin*

The Continuing Role of the Self-Study Coordinator or "Is There Life After the Self-Study?"

Judy Armstrong

The conversation went something like this.

"Knock, knock."

"Hi, Judy. Come on in."

"Hello, Dr. R. As you know, I'm getting ready to start on our self-study. Since you were the coordinator for the last self-study, I thought I'd ask you a few questions."

"Sure. I'd be happy to do anything I can to help."

"Well, how did you go about selecting the steering committee? Did you just ask people to help? Did the provost make recommendations? Did people volunteer?"

"Gee, I don't remember exactly, but I know it wasn't easy."

"Well, then, how many committees did you have?"

"Gee, I think it was five, but maybe it was six...no, it was definitely five, but I really don't remember exactly. Hey, I know where we can find out; it's in the self-study."

"Great, where are the leftover copies of the last self-study?"

"Gee, I don't know, but maybe Sharon remembers where we stored them."

"OK, I'll check with Sharon. Can you tell me how you gathered the data for the report?"

"Gee, I don't remember exactly, but I know it wasn't easy!"

If I had known what perils lay ahead on the road to self-study, I might have resigned as Self-Study Coordinator immediately following that conversation. However, "ignorance is bliss,"

and I merrily went on my way, confident that the last self-studies would be found (they were); that Dr. R's memory would improve (it didn't); and that all of the information, data, and statistics for the last five years were readily available at my fingertips (they weren't).

Oh well, I mused, I will learn everything I need to know at the NCA Annual Meeting, and I did. I learned all about the Criteria, all about forming the steering committee, all about writing surveys, all about the content of the self-study, all about the various formats a self-study can take, and all about the evaluation visit. I also learned that all Self-Study Coordinators are fraught with anxiety and worry excessively about things that never happen (unfortunately, we never worry about things that "could never happen," but do). So, I returned to Roswell confident that my committees and I would have no trouble locating all of the information we needed to put together our masterpiece.

As the committees began their work, one fact became overwhelmingly evident: the information we needed to put together our masterpiece was, indeed, available. However, it was spread all over campus in varying offices and varying formats. Some of it was documented and filed away neatly (if I could only remember what I filed it under), some of it was retrievable through the campus computer center (but we have only been on the system for the last three years), and some of it was lodged securely in people's memory banks (yes, I have those numbers, but why do you need them?) Other information was readily available from several offices or groups, each of whom had a different set of figures. As the committee rough drafts came in, it was immediately apparent that each committee had gotten information from a different office and that the numbers in one report totally contradicted the numbers in another report.

In an effort to alleviate some of the steering committee's fact-finding problems, the Dean of Administrative Services, together with the Director of the Computer Center, put together a "Fact Book," a compilation of data about employees (age, ethnicity, gender, length of service, etc.), enrollments, and budgets. While this did help, it did not take long for the steering committee members to discover that much of the information they needed was not in the "Fact Book."

Therefore, one of the strongest recommendations from the steering committee, repeated many times in the self-study, was that information and data be collected annually and kept in a single source—the "Fact Book." This became an even greater priority with those on the steering committee, many of whom are on the ENMU-Roswell Planning Council, when the institution received its first ten-year accreditation. If we had this much trouble gathering information over a five-year period, we shuddered to think what it would be like in ten years. Most of us would be retired (or senile), and unless we did something now to assure the annual collection and easy retrieval of information from a central location, the next self-study committee would be doomed to nervous breakdowns.

The point to all of this rambling is that institutional memory (like jumbo shrimp) just does not exist. Therefore, your life as Self-Study Coordinator may not be over until the next Self-Study Coordinator is selected. Unless your campus is fortunate enough to have a research department (and how many small community colleges are that fortunate, especially in these days of dwindling dollars?), you will have to take the lead in seeing that information is

collected and stored appropriately. After all, you are now the campus expert on accreditation, and who knows better than you what information should be kept and what is superfluous.

Fortunately for my successor, the Planning Council has taken up the banner for producing an annual "Fact Book." While we still have not produced an actual document (it has only been two years), we have pretty much decided what should be in the book. And as Self-Study Coordinator, I have tried to see that the information, surveys, and reports that should be in the book have been done. By the end of this year, we should have the "real thing" put together, but my job as "Fact Book" watchdog will continue. With any luck, by the year 2001, when a new Self-Study Coordinator takes over the helm, I will have my life back again—just in time to retire!

Judy Armstrong *is Assistant Dean of Instructional Support at Eastern New Mexico University-Roswell, Roswell, NM*

Chapter III

Preparing for a Focused Evaluation

The Mandated Focused Evaluation

Michael J. Reich

Introduction

In 1988, the University of Wisconsin-River Falls participated in a North Central Association (NCA) comprehensive evaluation. The NCA evaluation team recommended that the University's accreditation be continued, that our purposes were clear, and our resources were sufficient to accomplish our goals. The next comprehensive evaluation was scheduled for 1997. However, the team expressed concern about graduate education at UW-River Falls and recommended that a focused review of graduate education be conducted in 1992.

The University

UW-River Falls is a member of the University of Wisconsin System. It is a comprehensive university offering degrees through the master's level and is comprised of three colleges: Agriculture, Arts and Sciences, and Education. The University enrolls approximately 4,600 undergraduate and 500 graduate students. Most of our graduate programs are offered through the College of Education. The vast majority of our graduate students are preparing to become teachers—teachers completing master's degrees, teachers fulfilling continuing licensure requirements, or students seeking school-related careers in counseling, school psychology, and communicative disorders. The University is proud of its long history of teacher education and most faculty members would describe the University as a teaching institution.

The Focused Review

There are two types of focused review that occur between comprehensive visits—the mandated focused review resulting from prior Commission action, which directs the institution to evaluate specific areas, and the focused review that occurs as the result of planned institutional change. This paper describes our response and experiences in preparing for and hosting the mandated focused visit.

While few institutions look forward to a mandated focused evaluation, it is appropriate to view the request as an opportunity for change. The "weight" of North Central provides added incentive to address long standing needs and produces a sense of urgency that results in the reallocation of resources to address specific issues or programmatic deficiencies.

The 1988 comprehensive evaluation team raised concerns about several issues related to graduate education at UW-River Falls. These included: library resources, heavy teaching loads, declining number of assistantships, undergraduate/graduate "slash" courses, limited departmental resources, and faculty scholarship commensurate with graduate education.

After receiving the NCA Team Report in 1988, the University immediately began to refocus its commitment to graduate education not only to remedy the concerns of the team, but to provide additional visible support for graduate studies. A heightened sensitivity to graduate education resulted. While the focused visit team is not empowered to recommend the removal of accreditation, the mandated focus evaluation instills a feeling that the program may be in jeopardy. Thus, the mandated focused evaluation is more likely to create feelings of anxiety than is the focused evaluation associated with planned institutional change. However, these feelings that affect all levels of the institution—students, faculty, and administrators—can be channeled for effective change within a specific time period. Problems are addressed and solutions are implemented prior to the deadline established for the focused visit.

The focused visit provided the impetus to bring about significant and meaningful change in each of the areas cited.

- Our library support for graduate education was greatly increased with the acquisition of several electronic data bases, and the provision of additional departmental library budget supplements based on graduate program size.
- Our faculty senate and Chancellor approved a new faculty teaching load policy that granted additional load credit for graduate level teaching.
- Financial support for graduate students was increased by fifty percent.
- Departments initiated policies and procedures to limit "slash" courses.
- Facilities were remodeled and equipment was purchased specifically for several graduate programs.
- The meaning of faculty scholarship commensurate with graduate teaching has been, and continues to be, discussed on our campus as we attempt to reach a consensus regarding expectations for faculty.

The focused review was the driving force behind many of these changes.

The Focused Evaluation Process

The focused visit is generally limited to the areas cited by the comprehensive evaluation team. Therefore, a complete institutional self-study is not required. The format of the focused

report is quite flexible and may be brief or lengthy depending on the nature of the issues evaluated. The report should include an introduction that cites the Commission action that led to the review and an in-depth evaluation of the areas cited for examination. The focused review is viewed as a progress report on actions taken since the comprehensive team visit.

Immediate planning to address the problems cited should begin when the institution receives the Team Report that contains the team's recommendations and the focused review directive. A timeline for addressing concerns should be established and direct action taken to remedy them. Writing the focused report may be delayed until institutional actions are well underway and the change efforts can be evaluated.

When writing the report, it may be most efficient to have a single person responsible for the initial drafting of the document that should then be open for review and revision by all relevant parties. It is necessary to develop a consensus and a wide acceptance of the report. This process also serves to educate others about the positive actions that have occurred in the areas of concern. The report is forwarded to the team for study prior to their campus visit.

The Focused Visit

The focused visit team usually consists of two consultant-evaluators (CEs). The NCA staff liaison sends a list of proposed team members to the chief officer of the institution for comment. If the chief officer or focused visit coordinator has concerns about any of the proposed team members, he/she should discuss them with the staff liaison.

Two months prior to the visit, the institution is required to send a complete set of evaluation materials, including the focused report, Statement of Affiliation Status, Basic Institutional Data Forms (if applicable), and catalogs to the NCA. One month prior to the visit, a complete set of materials is to sent each team member. The team members may also request additional information to aid in their evaluation. (Our team requested a list of grants and contracts obtained by our faculty.) A proposed meeting agenda accompanied the materials we provided to the team.

Each team member was contacted by telephone to arrange travel and hotel accommodations. Our proposed agenda was discussed and tentatively approved by each visitor.

The evening before the visit provided an opportunity for the team members to plan their visit, discuss the institutional materials, and to determine the individual assignments and responsibilities. Quite surprising to me (the coordinator), upon arrival on campus, the team requested a number of changes in the suggested agenda and asked that several meetings be arranged with groups of individuals who we had not scheduled. My staff spent a "frantic" hour contacting faculty, setting up meetings, and arranging and rearranging schedules to accommodate their requests. By the time the team finished their hour meeting with our Chancellor, we handed them printed revised agendas. It also become necessary to arrange transportation to various departments around the campus to facilitate these additional meetings.

It is important to plan the visit as well as possible, but also to remain flexible and to anticipate last minute requests for information. Even though our visit was focused on graduate education, the team requested meetings with faculty who had received research grants and first year faculty, and they reviewed student files and faculty vitae.

It is imperative to continually reinforce the central mission or goals of the institution and the program. Even though we are primarily a teaching institution, with many graduate education programs, our team focused more on the research and scholarly activities of our faculty than on our curriculum or programs.

Despite a few surprises in scheduling, our visit was very successful. The team acknowledged our programmatic improvements and made suggestions for further development. The University has been requested to provide an additional document to the Commission that clearly details the expectations for scholarly activity by our graduate faculty.

Conclusion

The focused evaluation can be the catalyst to bring about significant and needed programmatic change. The focused report is viewed as an interim report between comprehensive visits, and must clearly document changes and emphasize the nature and objectives of the program. Finally, after you have done your best to plan and schedule the meetings, remain flexible and open to last minute requests for materials, data, or meetings.

Michael J. Reich *is Associate Vice Chancellor/Dean of Graduate Studies at University of Wisconsin-River Falls, River Falls, WI*

Preparing for a Focused Evaluation for Institutional Change

Linda Sather

Introduction

The administration, faculty, staff and students of Clarkson College, Omaha, Nebraska, submitted a 1991 focused report to the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The focus of the report was on the success of the College in developing and implementing its Directed Studies program and in evaluating and appropriately planning its evolving financial relationship with Clarkson Regional Health Services. The report also reviewed the implementation of the master's program in Nursing and in Health Services Management initiated in 1990.

Clarkson College was one of the first single purpose colleges to exist in the United States. It was established more than one hundred years ago as the Bishop Clarkson Memorial Hospital School of Nursing (1880). Since 1984, it has been a regionally accredited, private, not-for-profit professional college of higher education. It is one division of Clarkson Regional Healthcare Services. In November 1989, continued accreditation was extended for ten years by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools with a focused visit scheduled for 1991-1992. In 1990, the College requested NCA approval to offer a Master of Science degree in Nursing and a Master of Science degree in Health Service Management. In June 1990 the request was approved with the stipulation that the master's degree granting level be limited to these two programs and that they be reviewed during the focused evaluation.

Preparation of the Report

A steering committee was assembled for the process of critical examination of the focused areas. The Steering Committee was composed of fifteen members: one Dean, four Professors, one Associate Professor, two Assistant Professors, two Instructors, the Manager of Administrative Services, the Director of Student Services, a Data Specialist, a librarian, and two Executive Secretaries.

A draft copy of the report was also distributed to key individuals who reviewed and evaluated the document. These persons were: a Professor, a writing reviewer, and a Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs from another institution. Their critique was valuable and their input was included in the final copy of the report.

The Report Format

- **Directed Study Program.** The report first outlined the History of the Directed Study Program. This included the initial documentation of need, an explanation of the Directed Studies Pilot Project, and the subsequent documentation of need. Part of the subsequent documentation of need included a market assessment of programs primarily delivered at some distance from the Clarkson College campus. Clarkson College contracted with the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems to conduct this market survey.

  The next section of the focused report addressed the catchment area for the Directed Study program for Rural Registered Nurses. The characteristics of the four catchment sites, the characteristics of the student population, and the description of the Directed Study Program were explained in detail.

- **Financial Relationship with Clarkson Regional Health Services.** Clarkson College officially became a free-standing corporation within the holding company of Clarkson Regional Health Services on November 28,1988. The report detailed the Corporate relationship, the budgeting process, and the fiscal health of Clarkson College.

- **Implementation of the Graduate Program.** In December 1989, Clarkson College submitted a request to the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools to change the affiliation status of the institution to offer a Master of Science degree with professional curricula in two areas of emphasis: nursing and health services management. Effective June 22, 1990, Clarkson College's accreditation was extended to include programs leading to the master's (professional curricula) degree.

  The report outlined: the History of the Graduate Program, the Curriculum, the Graduate Student Profile, and the faculty. The strengths of the Graduate Program and the areas of needed improvement were detailed.

- **Institutional Resources.** The resources of Clarkson College, its classrooms, services and personnel were described in the report. This is an area that is most visible to the team members in their tour of the College.

The Site Visit

The focused visit was made on November 18-19, 1991. The two evaluation team members were Presidents of small private colleges. The team members had been provided a tentative agenda and they made only a few changes. For the review of the Directed Studies Program

the team met with the College President, the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, the Dean, the Director of the baccalaureate program, the Director of the graduate program, faculty, staff, and students. The team reviewed all previous NCA reports, the current report, other documents, and all course syllabi. The summary report for the Directed Study program was favorable.

To assess the financial relationship with Clarkson Regional Health Services the team met with the President, the Executive Committee of the Board, the Financial Officer of the Corporation and the College, and reviewed the budget and the audit report. The expectation was that the College would become increasingly independent of the corporate resources. It was determined that the tools were in place to help assure the financial independence of Clarkson College.

To review the Master's programs in Nursing and Health Service Management the team met with the President, Dean, Director of the Graduate Program, Director of the Educational Resource Center, faculty and graduate students. There was an extensive review of all exhibits. A significant amount of time was spent interviewing students in the graduate program. All aspects of the graduate program met accreditation requirements.

The reviewers offered advice and suggestions in their role as consultants, which were greatly appreciated by the College. The next comprehensive visit is scheduled for 1998-99 with the recommendation of no further focused evaluations.

***Linda Sather** is Assistant Dean of Nursing Programs at Clarkson College, Omaha, NE*

Chapter IV

Learning from the Present

The Self-Study Report and the Institution's Mission Statement

Gene Mueller

Following a year of meetings and faculty hearings, Henderson State University (HSU) adopted a new mission statement in the fall of 1988. Briefly, the new mission declared Henderson State University to be Arkansas's public liberal arts university with strong professional programs in business and education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Later that fall the President called for a strategic planning retreat to set the guidelines for implementing the mission statement. The implementation process began in the spring of 1989 with task forces preparing reports for a newly created University Planning Council (UPC) that would subsequently make specific recommendations regarding the implementation of the mission statement. Since this process was continuing while the self-study process was undertaken (1989-1991) it was decided to focus the entire report on the mission statement. This decision aided in writing the Self-Study Report, as it gave focus to both the content and the process.

Critical to the success of completing the Self-Study Report, and in making the task achievable, was the role and composition of the Steering Committee. Appointments to the Steering Committee were made by the President, and included individuals who were instrumental in drafting the new mission statement, as well as persons who served on the UPC. Furthermore, the President agreed that key administrators should be on the Steering Committee, such as the three vice-presidents. Serving in essence as an executive committee, having the "movers and shakers" on the Steering Committee gave credibility and strong support to the Self-Study Coordinator.

When I agreed to coordinate the Self-Study Report for HSU, I had little knowledge of the task that lay before me. I knew, however, that the first decision made (after reading the North Central Association's publications) should be the organization of the Report. While the North Central Association addresses the structure of the Report, the Commission also states that "there is no single way to organize the Self-Study Report." (*A Guide to Self-Study for Commission Evaluation, 1990-92*, p. 21). There are only three basic criteria to follow: Introduction, Body, Summary (*Guide*, pp. 22-23). While the Self-Study Coordinator would

be responsible for composing the introduction and summary, additional faculty and staff assumed the task of writing the reports for the "Body" of the Self-Study Report.

For the "Body" of the report, it was decided to establish functional committees for each of the five major areas of the University (student services, academics, academic support services, financial affairs, administrative). All committees were instructed to submit a written report addressing the four Criteria for Accreditation, with a central focus on the mission statement. Since Criterion One asks for evidence that the institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission, we decided that the remaining Criteria (two through four) would directly refer to those issues raised in answering Criterion One. Thus all areas indicated how they implemented, or were in the process of implementing, the mission statement. Establishing these functional committees, with a liaison person from the Steering Committee, allowed us an opportunity to involve additional faculty and staff in the self-study process. We believed that it was important to involve as many persons as possible, as it would provide an opportunity for faculty and staff to evaluate where the University stood in regards to its newly adopted mission statement. Since each area represented by the functional committees was instructed to focus on the mission statement in its report, the University community could ascertain how far we had come in implementing the mission.

I will cite five direct references in the Self-Study Report as examples of how the different areas of the University responded to the self-study focus:

1. Student Services divisions declared that they "are dedicated to the Mission of the University" by offering a "variety of programs, services, and activities . . .[that] fosters the fulfillment of the University's mission." (HSU Self-Study Report, 1991, p. 4-1).

2. The School of Business reported how its mission statement directly supports the University's mission statement by offering a quality educational experience and by the fact that "the curriculum and teaching methods in the School of Business are supportive of the goals of liberal education as stated in the full University Mission Statement." (HSU Self-Study Report, 1991, p. 2-9).

3. The Fiscal Affairs Office explained how the budget process is directly tied to how the University plans to fulfill its Mission.

4. The Honor's Program administrator wrote that "the program supports the University's mission 'to excel in undergraduate education, always striving to enrich the quality of learning and teaching.'"

5. In the section explaining General Education, it was pointed out that the comprehensive core of courses required in the arts and sciences in General Education supports the liberal arts focus of the University's mission.

The tone for the entire Report was set in answering Criterion One (the institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission). Thus, presenting evidence to substantiate we were fulfilling Criterion One, we began by demonstrating how the mission statement was being addressed in all five areas. All three remaining Criteria, including

assessment of student academic achievement, evolved from the response to Criterion One. Allow me to make it clear, though, that those items that are driven purely by data, such as enrollment, graduation rates, and intercollegiate athletics, were reported in a straightforward manner. And, in some instances, a more descriptive style was utilized, such as in reporting about how the University is legally recognized in the state, the function of the Board of Trustees, and the structure of the staff senate. With that aside, the Self-Study Report was written to explain how the University was implementing its new mission statement by directing its resources (Criterion Two) to those areas that would allow the University to accomplish its mission (Criterion Three) and that it can continue to do so in the future (Criterion Four).

The functional committees made sure the data were collected and that the reports were written following the guidelines established by the Steering Committee. Once written, the reports were then submitted to the Steering Committee to make certain that the reports were consistent and that they adequately responded to the four Criteria. Requiring the reports to directly address the mission statement, and to elucidate how all four Criteria were applicable to how the mission statement was being implemented, gave specific guidelines to Steering Committee members on how the Report should be written. Thus, while much of the Report is, naturally, reporting data (numbers of faculty, et. al.), there was a common thread throughout the Report that gave focus to what the University declared itself to be and how well it was accomplishing its goals and purposes.

The Introduction and Summary were also tied to the mission statement. A brief history of the institution was written to show how and why it adopted its new mission, and how the mission reflected the institution's past. We also decided to include a section on significant changes since the last accreditation visit, and purposefully highlighted the new mission statement in this section. The mission statement was reproduced in its entirety, and we explained in detail how the implementation process was being carried out. By directing the evaluators' attention to the importance of the new mission statement, we hoped that they would use that as a 'measuring stick' when reading the report (which was our intention).

The conclusion in the Self-Study Report tied the process together. We candidly stated that "it was intended to make the new mission statement the centerpiece of the report." (HSU Self-Study, 1991). And, we pointed out how this allowed the University community an opportunity to introspectively examine the progress we had so far made. After all, we were still in the process of implementing the mission statement, and carrying out the self-study process provided us an opportunity to gauge how far we had come, and to assess the quality of our work. Thus, the Self-Study Report was an important task for the University; the Report gave us an opportunity to summarize what had been done and to reflect upon what was yet needed from the departmental level to University-wide policy. Consequently, the Self-Study Report became an integral part of the planning process to implement the recently adopted mission statement.

Finally, when we affirmed in the Self-Study Report that we met all four Criteria, we referred to the mission statement once more. In stating that we met Criterion One, we pointed out that the University's publicly stated purposes were consistent with its mission. Criterion Two was met by the fact that the resources were adequate to carry out those purposes identified in

Criterion One. We pointed out how we were accomplishing our purposes, Criterion Three, and that the University was "providing a quality liberal arts education" — again, a direct reference to the mission statement. And, in answering criterion four, we noted that "the writing of this report has enabled everyone to focus more clearly on the Mission and purposes of Henderson State University as it prepares to enter the 21st Century" (HSU Self-Study, 1991).

An important result in focusing on the University's mission statement in the process of writing the Self-Study Report, was the fact that the entire University community recognized the significance of HSU's mission and how the implementation process was changing the University. For example, a new admissions policy had been adopted, and departments were requiring more writing in their courses. Thus, achieving continued accreditation was more than a task by itself; the accreditation process became an integral part of the University's on-going task of implementing the mission statement by providing us an opportunity to evaluate what we had accomplished and to demonstrate (Criterion Four) that we are committed to continuing the process in the future.

Gene Mueller *is Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences at Henderson State University, Arkadelphia, AR*

A Total Quality Management Approach to Developing and/or Revising the College's Mission, Purposes, and Vision

Carol Scarafiotti
Laura Helminski

The principles, process, and tools of Total Quality Management (TQM) can assist in the development and/or revision of an institution's vision, mission, and purposes. Equally significant, the use of TQM can "make them real," as vision, mission, and purposes are transformed from ideas on paper to everyday action.

Definition of Mission, Purposes, and Vision

Criterion One for accreditation, as set by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA), states that "the institution has clear and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission and appropriate to an institution of higher education."

A college mission statement and its purposes carve out the unique approach in which the college serves its students. These statements explain the college's identity to the students and staff and describe why it is the choice of the students. The following quotation further defines an effective mission statement.

> An effective mission statement defines the fundamental unique purpose that sets a business apart from other firms of its type and identifies the scope of the businesses operation in product and market terms. It is an enduring statement of purpose that reveals an organization's product or service, markets, customers, and philosophy. (Pearce & Fred 1987)

Although a statement of vision is not required by NCA, a well developed vision statement gives the mission and purposes more meaning and helps the staff internalize the intent.

A vision is a "preferred future, a desirable and ideal state." It is the deepest expression of what the institution (its staff) wants, an expression of personal and collective aspirations. Focused on students (customers), it expresses how the mission will be actualized. It should capture the imagination, engage the spirit, and inspire performance. The ideal vision statement implies a strategy, states the standard of excellence, and is shared by everyone in the institution.

However, as indicated by the following quotation, a common problem with statements of vision and mission is that they are words on paper that, despite good intentions, never become reality.

> Developing a vision and values is a messy, artistic process. Living it convincingly is a passionate one, beyond doubt. Poster and wallet-sized cards declaring the vision and corporate values may be helpful, but they may not be. In fact, they can hinder and make a mockery of the process if the vision and values are merely proclaimed, but not lived convincingly.
>
> From *Learning to Love Change: The New Leadership*

In order to develop more than a mere file document, what is needed is a development or revision process that involves the participation of the entire college so as to obtain commitment (shared vision) and to continue to direct everyday activities.

Total Quality Management offers a process (The Plan Do Check Act Cycle) that will make the college mission and vision statements an integral part of the college. The remainder of this document will explain how Rio Salado Community College developed its vision, and revised its mission and purposes using TQM Principles, the Plan Do Check Act Cycle, and TQM tools.

The Principles, Process, and Tools of TQM

Rio Salado Community College, one of the Maricopa Community Colleges, used the combined principles of TQM authors Dr. W. Edwards Deming, Dr. Joseph Juran, and Philip Crosby as a basis for developing the Rio Salado principles.

General Principles of TQM

1. Improving quality leads to improved productivity.
2. The person doing a job is generally the most knowledgeable about that job.
3. People want to be involved and to do their jobs well.
4. More can be accomplished working together to improve the system than having individual contributors working around the system.
5. A structured problem-solving process using graphical techniques produces better solutions than an unstructured process.

6. The adversarial relationship between labor and management is counter-productive and outmoded.

7. Every organization can benefit from soliciting the participation of the people who work there in improving the way things are done.

Rio General Principles of TQM

1. Quality is defined as meeting or exceeding internal standards and our customers' expectations.

2. Quality is everyone's responsibility.

3. People want to be involved and do their jobs well.

4. Because the person doing a job is generally the most knowledgeable about that job, that person is the appropriate one to improve it.

5. More can be accomplished working together to improve the system than having individuals working outside or around the system.

6. A structured problem-solving process produces better solutions than an unstructured process.

7. Trust, not fear, can create a climate that promotes quality.

8. A meaningful system of rewards and recognition is important to quality.

9. Quality improvement is a continuous process.

The customized TQM principles of Rio Salado Community College (RSCC) guided the college in selecting team members to develop the vision, mission, and purposes. The team was vertically (representing all levels of employment at the college) and horizontally integrated (representing major departments of the college). The RSCC principles also helped the team focus on concepts such as meeting the needs of internal and external customers and commitment to continuous improvement, all of which culminate in compelling vision and mission statements.

The following Rio Salado vision was developed, and mission and purposes were revised over a three month period through the use of the **Plan Do Check Act Cycle** and several TQM tools.

Vision Statement

In the year 2000, Rio Salado Community College is the college of choice for its students because it guarantees academic success through teaching excellence and the fostering of independent learning skills. Our responsive and responsible commitment to our many communities of unserved and underserved populations is evident through our comprehensive student support services, our dedication to visionary and innovative learning delivery and design, and our high quality student-centered instruction. We focus on total quality and foster a caring, supportive, harmonious academic and work environment, based on equal opportunity and a respect for human dignity.

Mission Statement

Maintaining both a responsive and responsible commitment to our students, employees and community, Rio Salado Community College is the educational change agent for the Maricopa County Community College District. We accomplish this by creating high quality learning opportunities for diverse populations, and by delivering them through convenient and unique approaches, systems and locations. We are dedicated to continuous improvement and to innovation that challenges the limits of tradition.

Purposes:

1. Provide general education, occupational, and basic skills programs, and the first two years of baccalaureate courses for student transfer.
2. Foster and promote innovation; and the integration of technology, in the design, development, delivery, and management of educational programs and services.
3. Cultivate educational partnerships with business, industry, government, and other institutions.
4. Provide comprehensive student support services.
5. Provide cultural activities and personal/professional growth programs for the community.

The following explains how Rio Salado Community College used the TQM **Plan Do Check Act Cycle** and TQM tools as vehicles for developing, revising, and internalizing and assessing its vision and mission.

- In the ***Plan*** stage Rio Salado Community College developed its first draft of a vision and revised the mission and purposes using such tools as "Affinity" and "Cause and Effect Diagram." Through the "Affinity Diagram" the team was able to reach consensus about vision by brainstorming the answer to the question, "What should Rio Salado Community College look like in the year 2000?" The "Cause and Effect" tool helped the team further refine the key concepts of both the vision and mission.

  The team analyzed existing data to ensure that the college was actually doing what the mission indicates. Many versions of the early drafts were sent out to the entire college personnel for clarification and input.

- In the ***Do*** stage of the cycle Rio Salado Community College actually began the process of helping each individual internalize the vision and mission in terms of his or her job. Copies of the vision, mission, and purposes were hung on walls throughout all the Rio offices and classrooms. Most importantly, however, several RSCC team members visited all the college departments to discuss the vision and mission and answer questions.

- The ***Check*** stage of the cycle continued long after the official documents had been published in order to provide the college with objective feedback—data that

illustrated the extent to which the vision and mission were being accomplished. Information from student, faculty, employee, and customer surveys helped the college continue to evaluate the vision and mission.

- During the ***Act*** stage of the cycle, the college developed both strategic and tactical plans and began their implementation as related to the vision and mission.

Since the key principle of TQM is continuous improvement, the ongoing nature of the **Plan Do Check Act Cycle** ensures that the vision, mission, and purposes are actualized on a day to day basis. Those guiding statements have become the reality of the institution.

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Carol Scarafiotti *is Dean of Instruction at Rio Salado Community College, Phoenix, AZ*

Laura Helminski *is Faculty at Rio Salado Community College, Phoenix, AZ*

Institutional Improvement Through Self-Study and Planning

James R. Faughn
Lloyd H. Hammonds

Institutional improvement at Ranken Technical College is accomplished through continuous self-study and planning. Neither self-study nor planning should stand alone, but must be a joint activity with the goal of institutional improvement. Planning, which incorporates self-study, should become an integral part of an institution's culture. This presentation discusses how the planning process at Ranken Technical College has addressed this challenge.

Before beginning a discussion of how a particular planning system operates, it is important to identify the purposes of that activity. The purposes of planning at Ranken Technical College include:

- to ensure that the College successfully achieves its mission;
- to provide for the most efficient use of the College's resources;
- to prepare for future challenges and opportunities.

To achieve these purposes the College recognizes that the following steps must be taken to ensure successful planning:

- Identify where the College is at present—strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Where should the College go from here? (College Vision and Planning Guidance)
- How do we get there? (Strategic Plan)
- What is our blueprint for action? (Operational Plan)
- How do we know we are on track? (Control Function)

First Major Activity: Review by Stakeholders

One of the initial questions to be addressed is what role Ranken Technical College's stakeholders should play in the future of the institution and in its planning processes. A stakeholder is defined as "any group or individual who is affected by or who can affect the future of the college—customers, employees, suppliers, owners, governments, financial institutions, and critics" (Bryson, 1989). Stakeholders of Ranken Technical College include: students, alumni, employers, faculty, staff, administration, Board of Trustees, advisory committees, suppliers/contractors, governments, and accrediting agencies. This planning system is based on the premise that to be successful it must meet the needs of its stakeholders. If Ranken performs well in the eyes of each of the above stakeholders its success can be assured. Hence, the College must consider each of these stakeholders when conducting planning activities.

Each educational and staff department at the College will identify its particular stakeholders and review current data and analysis supplied by the Outcomes Assessment Committee and the President's Advisory Committee on Institutional Improvement (PACII). Upon identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). This is done to determine where each department is with respect to accomplishing its mission. An initial written report is also made to the person responsible for the area being analyzed with a request for action. Requests for action also include a preliminary plan. This portion of the planning system requires the involvement of all employees of the College and is overseen by the institution's Planning Committee.

Second Major Activity: Review of Mission and Vision

At the foundation of planning at Ranken is the College's statement of mission and purposes, which sets forth the institution's reason for being. This document will be the most fundamental at the institution and although reviewed periodically will be less likely to change than other planning documents. From the College's statement of mission and purposes a "Vision Statement" is developed.

The "Vision Statement" clarifies what the institution should look like and how it will achieve its mission and purposes. The statement should not set specific objectives to be attained, but should state in general terms how the mission/purposes will be implemented and should be capable of having specific goals/objectives set from them. The "Vision Statement" will be slightly narrower than the mission statement but broader than the ultimate institutional plan that is developed; hence, the statement serves as a bridge between the statement of mission and the actual plan.

As part of the second major activity, each year the College reaffirms its stand with respect to mission/purposes and vision. Each is reviewed by every department after receiving input from stakeholders. The College's administration meets to examine proposed changes and makes a final recommendation to the College's Board of Trustees.

Third Major Activity: Developing Strategic Goals

The strategic goals will be developed following the approval of the mission and vision by the Board of Trustees. The process of developing strategic goals has three steps at two different levels. The first level is conducted by the Planning Committee and PACII; the second level is completed by each department at the College.

In the first level the Planning Committee reviews the mission and vision to ensure they understand any changes received from the Board. Upon completion of this review the Planning Committee again reviews the information received from the SWOT analysis. Finally, the Planning Committee writes the "planning guidance" for the various departments. This guidance will complement the mission and vision. It will be more specific and provide clear direction for each department's planning. The planning guidance is reviewed by PACII to ensure the intent of the SWOT analysis has also been met.

In the second level each department reviews the mission and vision to ensure they understand any changes received from the Board. Each department also reviews the SWOT analysis. Finally, using the mission, vision, and planning guidance, the departments will develop short, intermediate, and long-term goals to be presented along with preliminary budget recommendations.

Each administrator in charge of a functional area will be responsible for ensuring that his/her departments have all the information and support needed to complete this task. In addition, each administrator of the College also develops his/her own goals for the following year.

Fourth Major Activity: Planning Committee Review

The Planning Committee will review summaries from each department. The Committee will make certain that the departments have understood the planning guidance and can proceed as planned.

There are three steps in the Planning Committee review:

1. Each administrator responsible for a department will review its strategic goals and measurements. The administrator will prepare a summary for the Planning Committee detailing the strengths and weaknesses for each of his/her areas. Each administrator will also present his/her personal goals for review.

2. The Planning Committee may (typically at the recommendation of the administrator responsible for the area) amend, reject, and/or add goals for each of the functional areas.

3. Budgets are established and a summary budget is presented for Board approval.

The Planning Committee oversees the overall process. PACII reviews the administrative goals and makes recommendations for change.

Fifth Major Activity: Operational Plan

The Operational Plan is the substance for conducting the department throughout the fiscal year. The plan tells stakeholders how the department will operate during the year, how the department's success will be measured, how much each department will spend, and who is accountable for the resources.

In developing an operational plan, each department will review the approved strategic goals after having received its budget allocation for the next fiscal year. Each department then identifies the action items needed to accomplish each of the goals and determines how each one will be measured. Finally, the resources will be allocated and accountability assigned for each.

Each administrator has the responsibility to make certain that his/her respective areas have all the information and support needed to complete this process.

Sixth Major Activity: Control

The final major activity of the planning process is designed to ensure that the College is proceeding according to plan and if corrective action is necessary that it be identified as soon as possible and implemented.

This function is accomplished through monthly budget reviews and quarterly reviews on progress toward goals. In addition, at the end of the year the Outcomes Assessment Committee helps evaluate the extent to which certain goals are met.

Summary

Planning and self-study are critical elements to an institution's vitality and readiness to meet the challenges of the future. We believe that the steps identified herein have contributed significantly to the success of Ranken Technical College and will continue to help us shape our future as we move into the next century.

James R. Faughn *is Senior Vice-President at Ranken Technical College in Saint Louis, MO*

Lloyd H. Hammonds *is Academic Dean at Ranken Technical College in Saint Louis, MO*

Program Planning and Review as Components of Assessment

Marianne E. Inman

Introduction

Following Northland College's NCA visit in February 1991, significant work has been undertaken to revise our mission statement and to develop a set of institutional values, goals, and educational objectives. Building on that strong base, the College has also embarked on a series of comprehensive reviews of programs, majors, and the liberal education requirement that lies at the heart of Northland's liberal arts/environmental mission. In addition, the entire campus community has been involved over the last several months in developing a far-reaching set of academic goals. These activities, along with a number of curricular and academic planning initiatives, have provided significant insight into the overall effectiveness of a Northland College education and are contributing substantially to the development of Northland's assessment plan. Components of the review and planning processes are discussed in detail below.

Program Reviews

In the spring of 1991, Northland's Academic Council approved a plan to review all 27 of our academic programs on a three-year cycle. Accordingly, nine programs per year were scheduled for review. Guidelines were developed that included the following categories:

- historical review, to include a discussion of program goals and how well they have been met, and trends in staffing, curriculum, students, facilities, and external funding;
- relationship to college mission;
- program, to include curriculum and academic requirements;

- retention;
- staffing;
- financial support and resource needs;
- overall assessment of the program; and
- plans for the future.

Program coordinators, in conjunction with other faculty members in the area, were asked to prepare a narrative report addressing in some detail each of the above categories. Statistical information showing trends over at least the past five years was provided by the registrar, the admissions office, and the alumni and career services offices. Student course evaluations were also considered, as were extensive surveys of declared majors and minors in each program. Review sessions were scheduled during the fall semester so that recommendations with budget implications could be incorporated on a timely basis into the budget planning process that takes place during winter term. The Program Review Team consisted of a subset of the Academic Council: members included the three division heads, the director of the Learning Center, the Dean of Student Development and Enrollment, and the Dean of the College.

Review sessions were scheduled in two-hour blocks of time, with the coordinator of the program under review also present at the beginning of the session to highlight issues in the narrative report, to answer questions from members of the review team, and to engage at least in a preliminary way in a discussion of possible recommendations. By the end of the session team members had drafted a report addressing Strengths, Concerns, and Recommendations for each program, to be shared and discussed with faculty members in the area being reviewed before being reported to budget team members, to the Strategic Planning Team, to the Academic Council, to the faculty at large, and to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.

To date two-thirds of Northland's academic programs have been reviewed. The process has generally been seen as very positive, and a number of programmatic changes have already occurred as a result of mutually developed recommendations (indeed, almost all the programmatic recommendations from the first year's reviews have been implemented). Among the more positive aspects of program review have been a renewed institutional focus on mission; a creative, dynamic, and innovative approach to curriculum design and modification; a more analytical way of looking at the totality of Northland's academic program through the guided reflection required by the narrative report; a more deliberate matching of student needs, staffing, and resources; and greater openness to seeing the academic program as a whole rather than necessarily as a number of discrete entities. The spirit of teamwork and unity of purpose that developed as the process unfolded are two very important additional benefits. Faculty members have been both empowered and encouraged to think differently about their programs and to make changes in them. Interestingly, more than an occasional faculty member now notes with some pride and frequency that, by the time of the next NCA visit in the academic year 2000-2001, we will have completed three rounds of program reviews!

Review of the Liberal Education Requirement

Over the past 25 years, Northland has offered both a highly integrative liberal (or general) education requirement and the current set of discipline-based distribution requirements. Because of the distinctive and integrative nature of our liberal arts/environmental mission and curriculum, there is considerable interest in reviewing seriously the categories, content, and design of the liberal education requirement.

Our approach to that review has been led by the Academic Council and has featured discussions across the campus, involving a great many people in the process from the very beginning. Out of these discussions has come a survey form to be distributed to faculty members, graduating seniors, and a sample of recent alumni. The survey form has listed on it Northland's twelve educational objectives, and it asks respondents to do two things: 1) to rate each item on a scale of 1-3 as to its perceived importance to a liberal arts education; and 2) to rate each item on a scale of 1-4 as to the effectiveness of the liberal education requirement in attaining that objective. The results of this survey will then serve as the basis for Academic Council and campus community discussions on appropriate directions for reconfiguring or otherwise modifying the liberal education requirement. It is also designed to lead to a revised version of a survey that will serve as a component of our assessment plan.

One potential modification to this requirement is being piloted during the 1992-93 academic year. In response to earlier discussions concerning both a more integrative approach to a liberal arts/environmental education and an enhanced first year experience for incoming students, four faculty members are offering a two-semester, eight-credit interdisciplinary sequence of courses entitled Introduction to Environmental Studies. This faculty team includes the disciplines of biology, sociology, philosophy and religion, and English. Students were eligible to earn credit in the fall semester for one of the two social science courses specified in the current liberal education requirement, along with credit in the winter term for either a literature or a philosophy and religion requirement. In addition to course content, students develop communication skills in speech, writing, and active listening and are asked to apply both critical thinking capabilities and a sense of values to environmental problems and issues.

Because of the experimental nature of this course, one-third of incoming first year students were randomly selected and invited to enroll. These students were also assigned to one of the four faculty members for academic advising. Retention from the fall to winter semester has been very high, and from all indications, the course has been very well received. The current plan is to offer the course on a pilot basis for three years, refining the course as appropriate, and to make a determination at that time about its appropriateness as a common experience for all Northland students. During these three years we will also compare the development of critical thinking skills, overall academic performance, and retention rates with those of non-participants in order to assess the effectiveness of this course sequence in accomplishing some of our educational objectives.

This time frame coincides with the review of the liberal education requirement as a whole and with the work of the New Student Services Committee, which is examining the orientation and advising process and is considering another type of first year experience to help incoming

students understand the traditions and expectations of the academy in general as well as the distinctiveness and expectations of Northland College in particular.

Academic Goal-Setting

Interwoven with the review processes outlined above has been an extended and broadly based process for setting academic goals. Beginning in winter 1992, a series of meetings open to the entire campus community was held as a lead-in to developing a comprehensive set of academic goals. At the first meeting participants were asked to brainstorm ideas on first the question, "What is Northland College?" and then the follow-up question, "What Might We Be?" At subsequent meetings, collected and categorized responses were reported to participants, who were asked several times to prioritize the items so as to express their principal wishes and concerns. By late spring a committee composed of one faculty member from each of the three divisions, a student, and the Dean of the College met to draft a statement of goals for discussion by the faculty at large at their annual fall retreat. The revised statement was then submitted once more to the faculty, who ranked the top three items in each of six categories along with their top five choices in the document as a whole. These rankings are currently being considered by the Strategic Planning Team, in conjunction with goals developed by each of the other main functional areas of the College, for integration into a new strategic plan.

Among those items ranked very highly by the faculty are those dealing with ongoing consideration of the meaning of a liberal arts/environmental college and continuing reviews of programs, the liberal education requirement, the number and types of majors, and our effectiveness in synthesizing the liberal arts and environmental components of our mission. Because of this level of support and because of the importance of addressing these matters even before the next strategic plan has been developed, these most pressing and highest priority programmatic components of the goal statement are being dealt with in processes running parallel to strategic planning.

Conclusion

While there is much exciting work yet to be done, there is a feeling that each of these pieces is contributing in a significant way to a refinement of the whole picture. As the Northland College community devotes considerable energy and creative enthusiasm to the important tasks before it, there is confidence that we are moving steadily to an ever clearer picture of who we are and who we can be.

***Marianne Inman** is Vice President of Northland College, Ashland, WI*

Winning the Attrition/ Retention Battle

Carl H. Hamilton
Michael G. Mitchell

Introduction

Concern with student attrition and retention has been part of higher education literature for more than 30 years. However, the subject has become one of the primary challenges facing American colleges and universities in just the last ten. In the past, the responsibility for these concerns rested almost exclusively with admissions officers. However, with the sharp decline in the number of traditional age college students that began in the 1980's and is continuing into the 1990's, and with the budget implications of that decline, the concern has become institution-wide. The attrition/retention battle now engages boards of trustees, administration officers, and faculty. The response of Oral Roberts University to this challenge was to implement a comprehensive student admissions/attrition/retention program centered in the office of the Dean of Enrollment Management. This article describes the establishment of this program and the results that are enabling us to win the attrition/retention battle.

Background

Oral Roberts University opened for classes in 1965 and was accredited by the North Central Association in 1971. From a beginning class of 300 students, the enrollment grew to more than 4,600 students in 1986. Because of the pattern of growth, little attention was given to student attrition. There appeared to be a more than adequate supply of new students. After 1986 that changed for Oral Roberts University and for many other institutions at about the same time. With the pool of new students declining, the importance of retaining students became of paramount importance. The time lag between recognizing a serious problem and implementing corrective action is proverbial in American higher education. The very important first step was the establishment of the position of Dean of Enrollment Management. This position was filled in the Spring of 1990. This was critical to the success of the steps that followed. Now, the student service functions of admissions, registrar, financial aid, and student retention were all in the same reporting stream and we were ready for the establishment of the Comprehensive Advisement Center (CAC) on the ORU campus in the fall of 1990.

The catalyst for these changes was a presentation made by Dr. Robert E. Glennen, President of Emporia State University, at the 1990 NCA Annual Meeting entitled, "Fiscal Implications of a Retention Program." This program, which he had designed and implemented at Emporia State, included intrusive advising for all freshmen, orientation courses, and a campus-wide enrollment management program. The Provost of Oral Roberts University who attended that session was very impressed with both the retention numbers and their fiscal implications and returned to the campus intent upon implementing such a program at Oral Roberts University.

The Program

First, careful groundwork was laid with the President, deans, department chairs, and faculty of the University. Their input and "ownership" of the program was absolutely critical. Very little happens, of any significance, in a liberal arts institution without the involvement and ownership of the faculty and the broad support of the administrative team. Following that an orientation and training program was developed for faculty participants. They would be involved not in a typical academic advising relationship, but rather in a total academic and social integration effort to bond the new students to ORU. The program was conducted in a deliberate and highly structured way utilizing both faculty advisors and trained student associates. It is widely recognized that students have a natural reluctance to seek help—even when they are aware that help is needed. To overcome this reluctance we needed to take the program to the students. In other words—to be proactive.

The CAC advisors wrote to newly accepted students in the summer of 1990 to welcome them to the campus. This also created a mind set and expectation that there is a faculty advisor who will meet them when they arrive on campus and be ready to be their "friend" to help them through the process of establishing themselves at ORU.

Faculty advisors were provided with profile information on each of their advisees in order to begin to set a schedule of conferences broken down into the following categories:

Table 1

Advisement Schedule

Student Categories and Activities	Week of Semester
High Risk Student (entered on academic probation)	1–2
All other first-year new students	2–7
Mid-term deficient students	8–10
All students for preregistration	11–14
Specially referred students	as needed

A student adjusting normally and not considered high risk will see his or her advisor one time in the first half of the semester and later to pre-enroll for the second semester. If a problem comes to the attention of the advisor through routine reports, faculty intervention, or the intervention of staff, a student may see his or her advisor in the Comprehensive Advisement Center as often as once each week.

Staffing Considerations

It is critical for the founding director of a Comprehensive Advisement Center or similar department to be one who is enthusiastic and totally committed to the program. The individual must be able to communicate enthusiasm to the many publics that the CAC depends on for success. Faculty advisors, for example, are looking for a director in whom they can have confidence as an academic colleague.

In selecting faculty for the program it is important to find those faculty who have already demonstrated an ongoing concern for students—well beyond just advising them of which classes to take. Faculty need to have a genuine concern for the "total" student. They must be willing to work with their advisees in all of the areas in which students face challenges as they make the transition from their high school comfort zones to new higher education comfort zones.

Fiscal Implications

While the primary reason for implementing a comprehensive attrition/retention program is for the enhancement of the students' academic and social experiences, the economic implications are also enormously important.

Table 2

Retention Increase by Percent

Freshman*	2nd Year	3rd Year
1990	17.5%	12.5%
1991	22.5%	

*Defined as first-time, full-time freshman

Table 3

Retention Increase by Student Numbers

Freshman	2nd Year	3rd Year
1990	52	67
1991	92	

Table 4

Net Revenue Gained from Increased Retention

Freshman	2nd Year	3rd Year
1990	$286,000	$368,500
1991	$506,000	

Table 5

Net Revenue After Operating Costs

Freshman	2nd Year	3rd Year
1990	$137,575	$220,075
1991	$357,575	

In its first two years, the Comprehensive Advisement Center program has generated a total of $715,225 of net additional revenue, after operating costs, to the University. The program is on track for the 1992-93 academic year for the net additional revenue to exceed one million dollars.

Conclusion

Colleges and universities have no valid option other than to win the attrition/retention battle. We believe that the experience of President Glennen at Emporia State University and our experience at Oral Roberts University demonstrate that comprehensive advisement programs are widely applicable and when capably administered will achieve similar results. Early indications are that freshman students who were advised in the Comprehensive Advisement Center continue to return to the Center for help as sophomores and juniors. We expect this trend to continue.

The necessary ingredients are a centrally administered student services program, strong administrative support beginning with the President, full faculty participation and ownership, and capable and enthusiastic CAC administrative staff. It is our hope that someone who attends this presentation in two or three years will call or write and say, "You were absolutely right. The attrition/retention battle can be won."

Carl H. Hamilton *is Provost and Chief Academic Officer at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK*

Michael G. Mitchell *is Dean of Enrollment Management at Oral Roberts University, Tulsa, OK*

General Education: The Perfect Curriculum Versus the Perfect Delivery System– Developing a G. E. Program

Sheldon H. Cohen

The general education curriculum has been, both literally and figuratively, the cause of some of the bloodiest battles in academia. Deans, chairpersons, and individual faculty members all have strong vested interests in which, if any, courses will be required of all undergraduate students. This crucial debate invariably centers on extremely personal arguments, such as "what I believe to be the ideal curriculum" or "what worked well when I was a student." At a university, the bastion of scholarship, an approach based on the examination of the research dealing with the effects of the structure of the curriculum on student outcome measurements should create a more solid foundation for the discussion.

Educational journals contain an abundance of articles on the philosophy, purpose, and organization of general education programs, but there are relatively few reports discussing the effects of the structure of the curriculum on student performance. Some researchers have studied this problem using a single standardized examination as the student outcome variable. A typical example of this type of work would be the study performed at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. They found the following, "...analysis confirmed that actual course-taking patterns at UTK had no significant effect on student growth as measured by COMP gain."[1] Alexander Astin directed the most comprehensive study of the factors that affect the quality of student learning.[2] Eighty-two outcome measurements, of which 22 were related to the stated goals of general education, were studied for more than 20,000 students from 200 institutions. One hundred and ninety factors were examined to determine which items correlated with student outcome results. Although the actual relationship of some of the specific outcome measurements to general education can be debated, the massive number of different items studied strengthens the validity of the final conclusions. Astin summarized his findings with the following sentence, "The degree of structure (versus freedom of choice) in the distribution system of the institution's general educational program produces no effects worthy of note."[3]

Although one can argue about specific details in most of the studies, the weight of evidence strongly supports the fundamental conclusion that the structure of the general education curriculum does not make a major difference in student outcomes. Some faculty members might complain that the "correct" studies just have not yet been done. But this argument lacks standing in this debate if the University community uses the same burden of proof as the Food and Drug Administration. They operate under the policy that it is the responsibility of the seller of a medicine to prove its therapeutic value, and not the obligation of the user to show that the drug is worthless. If the blood and sweat that is expended in massive amounts on our university campuses to find the "perfect" general education curriculum is the academic equivalent of the search for the Holy Grail, how can we better use our energies to improve this most critical area of higher education?

Last year I was fortunate to receive a summer sabbatical grant that allowed me to visit with faculty, administrators, and students at a large number of various types of institutions of higher education.[4] What general education in particular should accomplish and what is being done on their specific campuses were topics of discussion. In those programs where there was a consensus of a degree of success, no uniform curriculum feature could be identified, but some broad commonalities were observed. All had the following characteristics:

- The faculty members were enthusiastic and committed to general education.
- There was strong support for the program from senior administrators.
- The faculty felt an ownership in the G.E. program.
- The students were informed early and often why G.E. is important to them and what the institution's goals are for the students in this area.
- The system was designed by the faculty and administrators at the institution to meet local conditions and was not a transplanted successful program from another university.
- Variations in learning by students were taken into consideration.
- The non-academic sectors of the university, such as student affairs, were active partners in the G.E. program.

In theory the design of a good general education program is straightforward. First, the institution must determine what skills and knowledge are expected of all their undergraduates. Then, a delivery system consisting of courses and other educational tools must be created to make sure the students can reach the institutional goals. And lastly, an outcome measuring system must be designed to monitor the success of the program and furnish information that can be used to continually improve the G.E. offerings. Unfortunately, in practice, most universities have had serious difficulty in completing this three-step process. No magical formula can be given that will lead to a hassle-free "ideal" general education program at your institution. Instead, a few helpful hints can be offered in the hope they may be useful to those struggling with a G.E. revision.

- Get faculty members talking to each other. Bringing in outside "experts" may contribute a little, but progress will only be made if colleagues get together to discuss their university, students, and goals.

- The most important thing that Presidents and VPAAs can contribute is support in both words and deeds for the concept of general education.

- Talk to students. They are the ones affected by any G.E. program and may have a very different perspective on what is presently being done.

- Many small changes often lead to greater real positive improvement in a G.E. program than the adoption of a single grand scheme.

- The specific courses chosen for the G.E. program are not as important as what is taught in the sum total of the program. The goals of the institution must be continually reinforced throughout the entire curriculum.

- Capstone courses offer an excellent opportunity to integrate the various goals of G.E. and to help facilitate the measurement of student outcomes.

- Consider the contribution of nonacademic units to the improvement of student outcomes. For example, time spent improving the advising system might pay a greater dividend than the equivalent effort expended on curriculum structure.

- Resources used to help faculty improve their teaching skills and better understand their students are well spent.

- Any G.E. program must include a "sunset" provision. Because of changes in faculty and students, components in a system may, with time, stop performing their designated functions.

- Measuring students' outcomes is not a science. Be willing to experiment and do not waste your time looking for the single standardized test that will measure all of your institution's student general education goals.

- Since there is not one correct curriculum or a single appropriate method for each institution, be willing to compromise.

The last word of advice for those trying to create a general education system for their institution is applicable to most of our higher education problems—*keep your perspective and your sense of humor!*

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4 The author wishes to thank the Mary B. Sweet Sabbatical Fund for financial support.

***Sheldon H. Cohen** is Executive Director of Planning at Washburn University, Topeka, KS*

Care for Complex Interests: Faculty Fiduciary Responsibility for General Education

David Fisher

College faculty are professionals. Whatever else this may imply[1] from the perspective of moral responsibility to clients professionals are distinguished from non-professionals by moral constraints—expressed in the form of rules and/or of guiding ideals and principles—governing their conduct. Such constraints typically limit possible professional responses to client demands for services, even in the face of increased competition for clients.

The following remarks explore the implications of applying a **fiduciary model** of professional responsibility to faculty-student relationships with specific reference to faculty responsibility for determining general education requirements. From the perspective of this model, students are neither customers nor consumers whose wants and preferences must be satisfied, as merchants or providers of non-essential services must do if they are to survive in a competitive marketplace. Because of the peculiar nature of the professional service that faculty render to students, their professional moral obligations can be described using Michael Bayles' model[2] of a fiduciary relationship. These obligations are summarized in the claim that as trustworthy fiduciaries **faculty ought to act on behalf of both the short and long-term interests of their students, with the informed consent of students, but subject to standards of the teaching profession**.

After a brief summary of some elements of the fiduciary model the remainder of this paper focuses on the difference between short- and long-term interests of two distinct but related clients—students and the society that supports educational institutions—in reference to discussions of general education. Two different value assumptions about the aims of general education are summarized as examples of the kinds of concerns that ought to be raised among faculty operating on the fiduciary model. In conclusion, it is argued that standards of the teaching profession provide legitimate reasons for giving preference to long-term over short-term client interests.

In the *fiduciary model*, the professional is presumed to have superior knowledge about the services being sought while the client retains significant authority and responsibility for decision making. The presumption is that a client's interest in retaining her/his autonomy is derived from the client's unique understanding of the values that determine her/his choices, in distinction from the professional's technical knowledge of the possible ways in which those values can be embodied in practical decisions. A potential investment may, for example, best achieve one client goal, such as maximizing profit, but at the cost of another value, such as investing only in corporations with good environmental safety records. **The fiduciary's role is accordingly to present valid alternatives relevant to client's interest for the client's consent**. Bayles notes, however, that

> As clients have less knowledge about the subject matter for which the professional is engaged, the special obligations of the professional in the fiduciary model become more significant. The professional must assume more responsibility for formulating plans, presenting their advantaged and disadvantages, and making recommendations. *Because of the increased reliance on the professional, he or she must take special care to be worthy of the client trust.*[3]

A fiduciary model seems appropriate for thinking about undergraduate college faculty obligations to students because of their similarity to investors, rather than those seeking legal or medical services. Unlike attorneys who have valid, self-regarding reasons for distancing themselves from the material interests of their clients, faculty and students share an interest in the matter of education, although their perspectives on its value may differ. Unlike patients seeking medical advice, students are not driven into the relationship by pain or fears about their physical survival, although there are analogies to such health-related fears and the economic concerns that trouble many contemporary students. Students typically approach their education seeking to increase their options: they wish to ensure long-term economic survival by developing a range of abilities that will enable them to adapt to changing situations, and they wish to explore career options by determining a match between their cognitive learning style, value beliefs, and affective concerns, and specific disciplines related to careers.

The responsibilities of faculty to students in higher education on a fiduciary model are both individual and collective. As individual fiduciaries, teachers have obligations of trustworthiness such as *honesty* and *candor* with students as their instructors and advisors; *competence* and *diligence* in research, course preparation, delivery of instruction, and advising; *fairness* as evaluators; and *discretion* in regard to matters disclosed to them by students in confidence, etc. Finally, however, like fiduciary professionals in other fields, faculty must not only evaluate the performance of their fellow professionals and determine in what manner services will be provided. They must also assume collective responsibility for determining which services will or will not be offered in response to client requests.

For faculty engaged in undergraduate college education, this collective responsibility is partly carried out through decisions about general education requirements. For faculty at a liberal arts comprehensive college, where there is typically a mix between traditional liberal arts and pre-professional degree programs, the carrying out of fiduciary responsibilities should be based on distinctions between short- and long-term student and social interests.

Both students and the societies that support educational institutions have socio-economic, short-term interests. Societies expect educational institutions to prepare a sufficient number of persons to fill occupations required by current and anticipated needs of social and economic life. Individual student-clients expect that education will prepare them to compete for the available jobs open to them upon graduation. From this short-term perspective, the demand is increasingly heard today for "relevant" knowledge and skills; for technical information or skill-related courses that are thought to enable students to fit rapidly and successfully into a work environment, with a minimum of on-the-job training. It is said to be easier for prospective employers to quantify and measure such knowledge or skills courses than to evaluate the job related relevance of traditional liberal arts courses. Many contemporary students, legitimately concerned about the competitive job market, and lacking the ability to visualize the eventual backgrounds that may be required for their long-term professional advancement, often demand opportunities to acquire a maximum range of "marketable" abilities that they believe will gain them rapid entry to a (higher-paying, gratifying) job. Such demands typically produce pressure on educational institutions to reduce or discount general education, and to increase the number of specialized courses available in pre-professional major areas.

Students, and the society that supports education, also have long-term interests that are distinct from their short-term concerns. Some terms of the ongoing debate about these long-term interests can be seen in different value orientations to the aims of general education as instrumental or therapeutic.

From an instrumental value perspective, general education requirements should provide students with sufficient information and skills—in communication, critical analysis, and constructive argument—to meet the immediate challenge they will face as junior and senior students (mastering a subject discipline) as well as the long-term challenges of economic and social/cultural life. This perspective assumes as much value neutrality as is possible: students are presumed to already have (or to be capable of developing independently of the classroom) primary social identities and cultural, moral, and/or religious values. Education is a means for furthering these identities and values but is not itself a source for forming identity or values. This perspective is recognizable in Kant's motto for the Enlightenment: "Dare to know." The assumption is that the unfettered use of human reason will, of itself, enable persons to discover the truth about nature, culture, and themselves, and that therefore it is the critical use of reason in which persons need to be educated. This perspective stresses the autonomy of the student-client in the learning process leaving value choices as undetermined as is possible.

From a "therapeutic" value perspective, the primary purpose of education is the diagnosis and cure of one's individual and cultural malaise. In a tradition extending from Matthew Arnold to such contemporary literary critics and philosophers as Wayne Booth, Charles Altieri, Charles Taylor, or Alasdair MacIntye, there is a shared conviction that an essential function of humane education is the transformation of "Philistines" or barbarians, aware only of their desires for immediate gratification, into self-conscious agents of value capable of diagnosing the maladies of cultural life and making contributions to cure them; the "humanities (and liberal arts in general) humanize," according to exponents of this approach.

A "therapeutic" perspective assumes that traditional age students are "weak evaluators," in Charles Taylor's sense. This means that they arrive at college with basic desires formed through peer group interaction and popular cultural influences, anticipating that a college education will enable them to satisfy as many of these desires as possible; the order of satisfaction to be determined by their random "free" preference. As mature adults, well-educated graduates should discover a new identity as "strong evaluators," according to this tradition: i.e., as persons who desire that their simple or first-order desires conform to a designated pattern. In more traditional language, mature persons should develop moral character from which to make their specific choices and judgments. To enable this process of self-discovery and creation, the resources of a critical appropriation of one's cultural heritage provide both means and ends.[4]

From this range of perspectives, education, like therapy, begins by increasing the client's awareness of her/his "illness" and/or of the "illness" of his/her social world to the point where the client can recognize it and be motivated to work with the therapist on a cure. The "clients" on this perspective, are *both* individual students *and* the culture that supports the educational institution. Each "client" needs to see through the illusions that now mask their "disease" in order to be able to work on it.

Each of these value perspectives on the aims of general education will lead those who hold them to different views of their fiduciary responsibilities for the long-term interests of students. If general education requirements are adopted for the political "turf" reasons typical in many institutions without reflective consideration of outcomes in terms of values, a primary fiduciary obligation of faculty to students will have been neglected. Nor can a fiduciary faculty, deliberating on the value dimensions of general education, neglect the fact that it is empirically in the interest of a society existing in rapidly changing technological, ecological, or political environments to ensure survival by building redundancy into the educational process. Whatever value perspective about general education may be adopted, educational redundancy is ensured by preparing the young to think as broadly and as critically as possible in order to meet unanticipated challenges.

To meet the short-term interests as outlined above, administration and faculty must determine the maximum and minimum range of "marketable" technical skills areas of study that can be provided given an institution's resources; skills that can be delivered with sufficient competence to enable graduates to compete with graduates of similar institutions. The faculty and administration must also measure student abilities relative to these offered alternatives accurately, and indicate through competent advising in which areas students are likely to succeed. Honesty and candor demand that students not be admitted (or encouraged to remain) at an institution if their specialized interests and abilities are unlikely to be met at a competent, competitive level. Competence and diligence also demand that faculty responsible for advising be qualified to understand the nature of the choices available to students.

Faculty responsibilities for long-term interests are fulfilled by establishing clear standards and valid requirements for general education along with the resources needed to meet them and through establishing a sufficient range of traditional liberal arts and science major fields to sustain the "critical mass" needed for critical thinking and creative innovation.

In the first regard the balance to be struck is between the several values—moral, aesthetic, cognitive, social—to be gained from "communication requirements" (oral and written communication); "cultural literacy requirements" (usually fulfilled through introductory exposure to the content of classical arts, humanities, and literature); and "critical analysis requirements" (usually fulfilled through courses in natural and social sciences and/or philosophy). Establishing the criteria for that general balance is one of the primary fiduciary responsibilities of faculty; notions of an ideal balance will differ from institution to institution, depending in part on the history of the institution, in part on demographic features of current client populations, and in part on national standards of the profession.

In the second regard, it is the joint responsibility of faculty and administration to ensure that a sufficient balance of traditional liberal arts and pre-professional departments be maintained in the interest of diversity itself, as well as in order to provide a climate in which critical questions can be raised between disciplines and perspectives. It is a further responsibility of both faculty and administration to foster such critical questioning by requiring faculty and students from different disciplines to work together in ways that allow for the development of creative, critical dialogue.

It is probable that in an increasingly competitive economic climate students will continue to look for educational opportunities that maximize perceived short-term interests whenever possible. This will be especially true of transfer students from junior colleges into liberal arts or comprehensive institutions, who often seek admission to prepare themselves for a specific pre-professional field or fields. Such students often claim to have satisfied general education requirements of the institution elsewhere (usually at a lower cost and/or with less demanding standards), in order to be allowed take as many specialized courses in their chosen field as possible.

While there are obvious economic incentives for four-year colleges to yield to demands for expanded transfer credit options, to do so would be a violation of a basic professional fiduciary responsibility: to practice one's profession within limits set by standards of that profession rather than by client demands.

A physician who yields to a patient's demand for a type of medicine or a surgical procedure known in the profession to be unnecessary, of no value, or even harmful, is practicing bad medicine. A therapist or counselor who gratifies a client's desire for acceptance or affection by offering sexual intimacy is violating the standards of his or her professions. Even on the agency model, an attorney who consents to a client's irrational, unfounded, and costly desire for litigation in a futile civil action is acting against the client's best interests and against the standards of her/his profession.

While informed consent to a suggested course of action is always desirable, and required on a fiduciary model, illegitimate choices will not be possible within the integrity of an institution and the fiduciary responsibilities of the professionals who staff it. The specific choices to be presented to a client for his/her consent are the responsibility of the professional not the client. Yielding to student demands to avoid a kind of educational experience in the name of perceived short-term interests is no more justified for a fiduciary educator than for a physician to yield to a cancer patient's desire for a bogus drug!

As the perspectives on the aims of general education discussed above suggest, standards of the teaching profession in this area admit a considerable range of diversity in values. But whichever value or combination of value perspectives is used in determining general education requirements all must insist on breadth of exposure to multiple disciplinary perspectives and contents as an essential component of an undergraduate liberal arts education. It is this exposure that a student has a right to expect from trustworthy professionals.

There is, of course, an absolute requirement that follows from this fiduciary limitation on the range of possible client choices: that a prospective student be told, in advance of enrollment, which choices will and will not be possible. But it is irresponsible to allow a student to graduate from a four-year liberal arts college of any kind without having been exposed to a coherent process of general education. Coherence implies that a faculty will have at least briefly debated the value concerns summarized above, and will have made intelligent professional decisions about which general education and distribution requirements that can support the conclusions of that debate.

There is a further reason for not allowing students to avoid a coherent general education process through excessive transfer of credit or through credit by examination. Most of the benefit of a liberal arts education is cumulative, qualitative, and experiential, not immediate and quantifiable. It is the conjoint process, together with its specific components, that produces (or can produce when properly supported) the kind of reflective equilibrium characteristic of a liberally educated person. If an institution has achieved the balances suggested here, part of what it will mean to be a graduate of the institution will be to have experienced the cumulative educational process that reflects the balances in interaction with fellow students and faculty. While the long-term benefits of such a process are difficult to measure or predict, such benefits seem to be among the primary values associated with a college liberal arts education.

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1 For a discussion of defining features of a profession, see Michael D. Bayles, *Professional Ethics,* second edition (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1989), pp. 7-14; see also C. Everett Hughes, "Professions," and Berbard Barber, "Professions and Emerging Professions," both in Joan C. Callahan, ed., *Ethical Issues in Professional Life* (New York: Oxford, 1988), pp. 31-39. For a review of contested definitions of professions, contrast the position taken by Magali S. Larson in her *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley: U of California Press, 1977) with those adopted by Eliot Freidson in "The Theory of Professions: State of the Art," and by Lisa H. Newton in "Professionalization: The Intractable Plurality of Values," both in Peter Y. Windt, Peter C. Appleby, Margaret P. Battin, Leslie P. Francis and Bruce M. Landesman, eds., *Ethical Issues in the Professions* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1989), pp. 38 -59.

2 Michael Bayles, *Professional Ethics, op. cit.* The outline of a fiduciary professional-client relationship assumed in these remarks is derived from Bayles' discussion in Chapter 4, "Obligations Between Professionals and Clients."

3 Bayles, *ibid.*, p. 79.

4 See Charles Taylor, "What is Human Agency?," in *Philosophical Papers 1* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 15-44 for a more complete discussion of the distinction between "weak" and "strong" evaluation: "In weak evaluation, for something to be judged good it is sufficient that it be desired, whereas in strong evaluation there is also a use of 'good'....for which being desired is not sufficient...." (p. 18).

Note. These remarks were originally prepared in response to a challenge given to the faculty of an independent comprehensive liberal arts college by its administration to discuss "how we should think of our students." The paper has benefited from discussion with Professors Roger Smitter and Sarah Broad Fowler, whose contributions are gratefully acknowledged.

***David H. Fisher** is Associate Professor of Philosophy at North Central College, Naperville, IL*

Academic Accountability for Student-Athletes: The Case for Disclosure

Jon Ericson

Last year, standout.. of...needed a reported 17 hours during the summer to gain his [junior college] diploma before becoming eligible to play for....

> Seventeen hours during the summer? Can't be true.
> It wasn't. He completed 24 hours.

Following his spring semester at..., Mr....came to...University, enrolled in a three-credit course (May 24-30), completed the course, returned to..., enrolled for 21 semester hours of academic credit (June 1-August 6). He completed the courses, received the 21 hours of credit and enrolled at... University for the fall semester. During a fall or spring semester, students take 10 to 18 credit hours over a period of 120 days. Mr....successfully completed 24 credit hours at two institutions in a period of 74 days. Mr....completed an academic challenge that few would attempt. A heart-warming story—a story university officials would want to feature in our marketing brochures. Then again...Mr....'s name does not appear on the public list of graduates of...University.

What happened between the corrected public statement of unusual academic accomplishment and the absence from the public list of university graduates? Would knowing what happened reveal something about the student-athlete or something about us as a university?

The relationship of a university to its student-athletes has been a major—and continuing—story in the national media. The relationship is one of exploitation; the story is one of scandal. The Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics charges that reform of intercollegiate athletics "must take root on individual campuses;...." It "must grow from our campuses."

Does the need for reform exist at our university, or is reform something that only other universities should implement?

An administrator noticed that a student-athlete received grades of Incomplete in three out of four courses. In response to the administrator's inquiry, a department chair wrote:

> [Professor A] gave [the student-athlete] an incomplete after [an assistant coach] requested it. According to [Professor A]'s account, he resisted this initially but finally relented because of the coach's special pleading and [the student-athlete]'s promise to do all the class work. [Professor A] also said he finally gave in because he became convinced that this was a case where [the student-athlete] had been exploited. . . . .

Professor A's reason for granting the Incomplete captures precisely the problem. A faculty member announces that athletes are exploited (notice how outraged I am), and then uses the exploitation as an excuse to participate in the very exploitation that the faculty member denounces. Professor A's behavior reinforces the message—from kindergarten through eligibility—to the student athlete: "Not to worry, the man will fix it. I do not have to be responsible for my behavior (until my eligibility runs out, and then I can cry 'exploitation,' and others can write articles about how universities exploit student-athletes)." And everyone feels so good: the caring, understanding, sensitive faculty and university officials feel good because they tried so hard to help the student. The kid feels good because he got to do what he loves—play sports. "Reformers" feel good because they get to be on the side of the angels and scream about exploitation. Then each fall the process begins anew.

All are players in the story:

"The Man, He Fix It"

> Tony is a fine little boy as he enters elementary school. Although he is a good kid, he neglects to learn what he needs to learn to do well in high school, but he does learn how to put a basketball in a hoop. He reaches high school without basic skills to read and write. It looks as though he will not be able to play basketball because of his academic deficiencies. But wait, an understanding, caring person comes along and enrolls him in classes that do not require basic academic skills, or in other courses where the teacher is understanding and caring. The man, he fix it, and Tony plays high school basketball.
>
> Tony's academic deficiencies finally catch up with him and he cannot enroll in a university to play basketball. But wait, a caring, understanding person finds a junior college that will enroll him and Tony gets to play basketball again. The man, he fix it.
>
> Two years later, Tony wants to enroll in a university so he can play basketball. But his academic deficiencies are now greater, not less. So what to do? But wait, a caring, understanding person finds a caring university that has a special program to help students with academic deficiencies. This university prides itself on being so good that it can take a person whose reading is poor and writing is worse, who often has little or no motivation to do either, allow the person to work outside the classroom thirty hours a week, miss a large number of classes, and still provide the student with a university education. So Tony enrolls at that university. At the end of the semester he is placed on academic probation. But wait, a caring, understanding coach talks to the caring, understanding teacher, and Tony receives an Incomplete rather than an F. The academic advisor for student-athletes calls the caring, understanding teacher to see what Tony

needs to do to remove the incomplete. The man, he fix it, and Tony is allowed to register for one more semester. Tony joins several of his teammates as they are led through registration by a caring, understanding assistant coach or academic advisor of student-athletes. Faculty at registration look away in embarrassment.

At the end of the year Tony is on final probation—or suspended—and is ineligible to play basketball his senior year. But wait, some caring, understanding people search diligently and systematically through the curriculum to find courses taught by caring, understanding faculty. Tony deserves every chance to succeed. So we give him one more chance—because we care. The man, he fix it.

One year later, Tony's collegiate basketball career is over. Tony is suspended because we gave him every chance to succeed, but he just did not have the motivation. This time, the man does not fix it.

Is Professor A simply a well-intentioned person who is unaware of the role that he plays in the story? Are those of us who hear such stories, and disapprove, innocent bystanders? Is the professor an exception or an example? Do the university's student-athletes receive a real education or a pretend one?

What if the public saw the academic records of our student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports? Would we see that releasing graduation rates covers up rather than reveals a university's conduct in how it educates its student-athletes? Who among us wishes to present the academic records of our student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports to prospective students and their parents—or to sign his or her name to the records?

"We must ensure that universities recruit only those students who genuinely qualify for admission, that the students take real courses.... Anything less misleads...abuses... subvert...." These words come from the president of a university that was embarrassed nationally by having the records of two student-athletes made public. Just *two*.

Until universities release the names of the courses and instructors taken by their student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports, reform of intercollegiate athletics will remain a sham.

Reducing the number of games, coaches, and grants-in-aid while increasing admission requirements, graduation rates, and the number of academic counselors for student-athletes all sound nice to those who cry for reform. They are changes that make presidents look good and faculty feel good. But at base, collectively, it is lip service.

The corruption in intercollegiate athletics is primarily in the academic division, not in the athletic department. And the corruption will continue until presidents, administrators, and faculty—and accrediting agencies—stand for what we say we are: guardians of the values of the university and the curriculum therein.

***Jon Ericson** is Ellis and Nelle Levitt Professor of Speech Communication at Drake University, Des Moines, IA*

A Social Justice Model for Higher Education

Mary Jane Hitt

Introduction

When Neil S. Bucklew became President of West Virginia University in 1986, he encountered a campus ready for growth in the area of social justice. There recently had been racially motivated incidents in the community. Women's groups were concerned that the University was not doing enough in the areas of child care and sexual assault prevention. Administrative coordination of affirmative action and equal opportunity programs was inadequate. There was a general sense of frustration with respect to the campus climate for women and persons of color. The time was right for change.

A number of reports and recommendations were awaiting President Bucklew's arrival, and he implemented a comprehensive set of social justice initiatives. A new position was established in the President's Office to coordinate campus efforts. The committee/council structure for dealing with social justice issues was strengthened. A Center for Black Culture and Research was begun. A sexual assault prevention officer was hired, and a Child Care Clearinghouse was established.

In the years since the social justice program was instituted, it has developed and changed to reflect lessons learned and institutional growth. The information below describes the philosophy guiding the effort; the organizational framework within which it is carried out; and institutional goals designed to make social justice a reality at West Virginia University.

Commitment to Social Justice

The following statement, adopted by West Virginia University's Social Justice Council, describes the institution's commitment to social justice:

> West Virginia University's role as the doctoral degree granting, research, land-grant university in the State of West Virginia gives the institution a special responsibility as a leader in the area of social justice. The pursuit of truth underlying the University's

> mission focuses attention on issues of diversity, power and perspective, so that students, faculty and staff may study and work in a climate of academic freedom and social responsibility, developing the skills, knowledge and self-esteem necessary for participation as world citizens.

Equal opportunity is a fundamental goal in a democratic society, and WVU shares the responsibility for achieving that equity. The institution is committed, therefore, to ensuring that all persons, including women; people of color; people with disabilities; gays, lesbians, and bisexuals; veterans; and persons of different religions, ages, international, ethnic, and economic backgrounds benefit from the many opportunities the institution provides.

In keeping with this responsibility, the members of the academic community are expected to demonstrate mutual respect, understanding and appreciation for all persons; to express that perspective in every dimension of the institution's life and mission; and to work collaboratively, representing not only the interests of their own groups and viewpoints, but also those of the wider community.

The importance of West Virginia University's social justice program goes beyond the benefits that accrue to any one person or group, to the strengthening of the University itself, and the enhancing of its ability to accomplish the mission with which it has been entrusted by the people and state of West Virginia.

Organizational Framework

Established in 1987, West Virginia University's President's Office for Social Justice provides five areas of service:

- Advocacy
- Diversity Training
- Policy and Program Recommendations
- Information and Referral
- Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Coordination

The Office is headed by the Executive Officer for Social Justice, who reports to the President and works with the Social Justice Council, which makes recommendations on social justice issues affecting the University community. The Director of Affirmative Action reports to the Executive Officer for Social Justice.

The Office works with a wide variety of campus groups and organizations, including the Black Community Concerns Committee; the Council for Women's Concerns; the Council for Disability Concerns; the Veterans' Association; the Organization for Native American Interests; the Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Mountaineers; the Center for Black Culture and Research; the Center for Women's Studies; and the Office of Disability Services. The Office

for Social Justice works to combat sexual assault, racial and sexual harassment, and discrimination, and to improve the campus climate for all persons.

Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives that have arisen from this approach to social justice, and specific curriculum and program initiatives that have been undertaken, are outlined below:

- Raise awareness of the meaning and importance of social justice on campus, in the local community, and across the state.

  Program efforts in this goal area include the following:

  — Developing, adopting, and using as appropriate a social justice logo.

  — Educating the members of the wider University community regarding the importance of social justice to the mission and people of the institution.

  — Working with the University's governing board to increase that Board's awareness of social justice issues and to assist it in its efforts to enhance the social justice climate in the University of West Virginia System of Higher Education.

  — Developing relations with state government leaders in order to enhance the social justice efforts of the State.

- Build alliances within the University and with those in the wider community to enhance the social justice climate for WVU faculty, staff, and students.

  Program efforts in this goal area include the following:

  — Supporting and participating in a Hate Crimes Forum.

  — Developing and supporting "Common Ground" forums.

  — Establishing and working with a WVU-Morgantown committee on racism.

  — Submitting a proposal for a Study Commission on the Status of Women at WVU.

  — Addressing homophobia and heterosexism in the institution, promoting awareness of and attention to issues of sexual orientation on the part of administrators and others.

- Provide leadership for curricular reform and development in the area of multiculturalism.

  Program efforts in this goal area include the following:

  — Encouraging strategic planning proposals in this strategic theme area.

— Supporting the work of the Cross-Cultural Committee.

— Enhancing opportunities for faculty to incorporate multiculturalism in their classes.

- Enhance the ways in which the University's evaluation processes for administrators, faculty, and staff address social justice, and encourage positive rewards for work in this area.

  Program efforts in this goal area include the following:

  — Encouraging appropriate evaluation of social justice efforts in the faculty promotion and tenure process.

  — Encouraging the inclusion of social justice as an item for consideration in the evaluation of administrators and staff.

  — Expanding the recognition system for specific contributions in the area of social justice.

- Provide social justice leadership development opportunities for administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

  Program efforts in this goal area include the following:

  — Supporting and providing training and development opportunities for administrators, faculty, staff, and students.

  — Supporting a Black Leadership Conference.

***Mary Jane Hitt** is Executive Officer for Social Justice at West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV*

Women Leaders on College Campuses: Assessing the Developing Leadership Potential

Nancy C. Sederberg

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present findings from a survey mailed during the summer of 1992 to 257 women in higher education leadership positions throughout the Midwest. Of the 257 women, 139 returned the survey, for a response rate of 54.1%. Analysis of questions pertaining to career development and advice offered to younger women is the main focus of this summary.

Introduction

Many of us who are currently serving in higher education are seeking ways to support and encourage gender diversity in our institutions. By listening to the voices of women leaders in academia, we can learn more about the barriers that exist there for women. But more importantly, by listening carefully, we can learn how these women leaders have overcome the barriers. With improved understanding, we can create better leadership opportunities not only for women faculty and administrators, but also for women students.

Review of Literature

- **Leadership**. Gardner (1990) stresses that a *leader* engages in the process of persuading others to follow shared objectives. In his discussion of leadership, he says that not all administrators are effective leaders. In other words, leadership can be found at all levels of an organization. In fact, Gardner (1990) believes that leadership should be *encouraged* at all levels of the organization.

Guided by the concepts that not all administrators are effective leaders and that leadership may be found at all levels of the organization, I surveyed women serving in top, middle, and lower level positions who are regarded by their peers and professional associates as leaders.

Gardner (1990) points out the need to develop women as leaders. Although women are now found in leadership ranks in higher education with increased prominence (Shavlik, Touchton, and Pearson, 1988), substantial obstacles still exist. Leadership programs for women, in order to be effective, must deal with these obstacles. But in order to deal with them, we must know just what these obstacles are. And it is from the women themselves that we get the best description.

- **Barriers**. According to Lynch (1990) three types of workplace boundaries must be crossed as women move into leadership positions.

  — *Hierarchical boundaries.* These separate the various levels in the organization. They are usually differentiated by formal requirements such as degrees and certification.

  — *Functional boundaries.* These separate different departments or divisions of the system from one another.

  — *Inclusion boundaries.* These are represented by the ways in which different individuals, by their position within the organization, relate to the center of power.

  Gardner (1990) states that the more serious barriers of prejudice and discrimination still confront even young women who have leadership potential. On the paths to organizational leadership, most of the gatekeepers are men. Many men still cannot fully accept women as leaders. According to Gardner, some of the obstacles are giving way, but mainly at the lower and middle levels of the organization. This is supported by the numbers of women in administrative and leadership positions now found at all levels but generally at the low and middle levels in our colleges and universities.

- **Career Development.** Barriers exist as women attempt to move from the role of student, to faculty member, to administrator. In addition, barriers confront women as they attempt to add on the roles required in their personal relationships, such as friend, wife, and/or mother. In fact, Minor (1989) includes *balance,* the work versus relationship issue, as an important factor in analyzing the career development issues in the workplace for women.

  According to Hogan (1978), the normative order of events in the life course for men includes schooling, job, and marriage. Each cohort of men will exhibit broad agreement as to which approximate age it is appropriate to start working, first marry, and have a first child.

  Lynch (1990) points out that women's career paths are typically more circuitous than men's. As a result, women are often funneled into low opportunity and dead-end positions. These positions do not allow them the opportunity to develop the skills necessary for advancement, nor the opportunity to demonstrate the skills they do have.

Leonard and Sigall (1989) attempt to clarify the work and relationship problems faced by women. Becoming powerful includes developing leadership skills, initiating relationships with both men and women, holding positions of influence, being committed to education and training, and basing personal and career decisions on their goals and abilities, and not on their fears and concerns. What are the factors that enable women to reconcile these problems effectively?

Socializing, opening doors, presenting career options, and helping to develop leadership skills are tasks performed by mentors. Mentors were cited as extremely important in the career development of women leaders.

- **Mentors**. Women need mentors who will function as teachers and as gatekeepers, who will encourage the development of their self-esteem, and who will help them understand and manage their career stages. Not only do women need to be shown *how* to be leaders, but they need to be convinced they *can* be leaders.

Summary of Findings/Advice to Young Women

This section briefly summarizes the written responses provided by the women leaders who responded to the survey. The question analyzed for this section was, "What advice would you give to a young woman today who is considering a career in higher education administration?"

- **Barriers**

  — *Hierarchical.* These are the boundaries that separate various levels in the organization, and can be differentiated by formal requirements such as degrees and certification.

  Women respondents stressed the significance of the Ph.D. In addition, they stressed the importance of teaching for several years in order that the young women understand what an academic institution entails. Also, many respondents cited the need for women to continue to do research and to publish.

  — *Functional.* These are the boundaries that separate different departments or divisions of the system or institution from one another.

Many women respondents cited the need for learning applicable financial management skills. In other words, it is critical to learn skills that cross divisional boundaries.

A frequent suggestion from respondents was to solicit good ideas from everyone, to always give credit, and to build a network of colleagues for support. It is also important to serve on key department committees and on college policy committees. When serving on these committees, according to the respondents, it is imperative to do background studies for learning purposes.

Learning to work across departments or divisions often occurs through teamwork. But above all, the respondents stressed, find a team with which you enjoy working. Teamwork is made easier when the participants enjoy working with each other.

- **Career Development**. The timing and sequence of events in a career is important. Respondents strongly encouraged women to get their Ph.D. before having children. Other advice was to plan the course of the career track, i.e., how many years to spend at various levels. "Don't be afraid of a lateral move if it broadens your experience."

  Some respondents also suggested that young women go to the type of colleges or universities that leads to their goal, and not just take any job that comes along. In other words, it is important to plan each step carefully.

  "Take your job seriously but don't take yourself too seriously." Women respondents frequently spoke of the need to set goals and priorities, but to find balance. They cautioned that because administration seems to have fewer rewards than teaching, it is important that women be willing to make the commitment of time and energy demanded and to enjoy what they are doing.

  It is critical for women to maintain a healthy balance between personal and professional lives. "Work smart, not just hard." "Focus on quality, and maintain your integrity no matter what happens."

- **Mentors**. Often women respondents cited the need for support through mentoring. They stressed it is important to seek and to find mentors, both male and female. In the mentoring process, women must learn to listen and to be flexible. As women grow in the mentoring process, they should select key issues to address.

  In addition, women should choose a model administrator and learn about effective management from him or her. "Find both male and female mentors, and mentor both men and women." Some women also pointed out the necessity to be supportive of others, because "you never know the kind of assistance you will need in the future."

  Particular mentoring activities that were mentioned by the respondents as significant for women included the Bryn Mawr Summer Institute, the ACE Fellows Program, and of course, serving as an NCA consultant-evaluator.

Summary

Women respondents offered some insightful comments to be shared with younger women. In fact, some of the advice is relevant for all of us. "Have the credentials, work hard, join professional associations, and develop your personal style with integrity. Be supportive of others. Above all, be honest with yourself and others. Don't be afraid to admit mistakes and ask for help from others."

One woman commented in sum: "Leadership is extraordinarily satisfying if you believe in what education can do for others!"

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Note: Analysis of the data for this project was performed by Ms. Karen L. Peper, student aide, Valparaiso University.

***Nancy C. Sederberg** is Associate Professor and Acting Chair, Department of Sociology, at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, IN*

A Cultural Diversity Plan

Kathryn Ballobin
Peter Rush
Jan Wislalowski

Overview

Garry Trudeau, the "Doonesbury" cartoonist opened a speech for Yale University's class day with a parody of political correctness terms. This presentation is not meant to inculcate political correctness, but rather to illustrate how the Platte Campus of Central Community College (CCC) in Columbus, Nebraska, addressed diversity issues at an all-college (multi-campus) in-service and in other ways. It is perhaps fitting that our campus acronym is PC!

CCC's student base and staff base is changing in subtle yet inexorable ways. Meat-packing plants in Grand Island, Madison, and Schuyler have attracted Hispanic and Laotian employees who are settling in as permanent residents. Central Nebraska is well-known for its ethnic enclaves—be they Czech, Polish, Swedish, Norwegian, etc. Agricultural communities and urban communities send us students. New industries from Chicago and Massachusetts have brought in new neighbors and fellow citizens with diverse backgrounds. For these reasons, Platte chose to focus on diversity through a campus-based cultural diversity committee. Our presentation will review the structure of our committee, 1991-92 activities, and focus on our all-college in-service in the fall of 1992.

Beacon Grant

Our campus recognized the needs of our growing diverse student body and the diversity in our employees; the Beacon Grant was a federal grant that addressed these needs. The Beacon Grant was awarded to ten colleges that would work together and learn from each other for the purpose of identifying, promoting, and producing measured results of cultural/work force diversity. CCC joined with Beacon grantee Metropolitan Technical Community College of Omaha. The grant did not provide us with a wealth of funds; it provided us with continuity and determination among our three campuses (Hastings and Grand Island being the other two). The period of the grant was from June of 1991 to November of 1992.

As a tool to monitor results, a survey was developed by Metropolitan Technical Community College. The first survey was administered to each college at the beginning of the grant period. This survey contained questions that revealed areas in our institutions where we could address cultural diversity awareness. To ascertain the growth in each institution after a year and a half of diversity programs, a second survey was conducted in November of 1992.

The goals of the grant were to expand planned programs to accommodate leadership diversity; design innovative staff development programs/activities encouraging the development of leadership; design personnel practices to enhance the recruitment and retention of women, persons of color, immigrants, the physically challenged, and individuals of traditionally under-represented groups in leadership positions; provide faculty/counseling in-service in using curriculum components and classroom techniques that foster multicultural sensitivity; and provide widespread dissemination of project activities and outcomes beyond the consortium to statewide, regional, and national audiences.

As a result of this grant, all three campuses devoted interest in, personnel, and time to sensitizing our own environment to diversity. Words such as ethnocentrism, awareness, understanding, acceptance/respect, appreciating/valuing, selective adoption, and multiculturalism became everyday language.

Cultural Diversity Committee Structure and Function

The structure of the Platte Cultural Diversity Task Force Committee consisted of a chairperson and seven other members appointed by the campus president. Each member of the main diversity committee served as either a chair or co-chair on a subcommittee. There were four subcommittees formed: Gender Issues; Legal Issues; Ethnic Issues; Age Issues. Volunteer membership for the subcommittees was solicited from the Platte Campus staff, instructors, and administrators by sending out a request form to be signed and returned indicating first and second choice subcommittees that they would like to serve on.

The main diversity committee met once a month and subcommittees met anywhere from twice a month to several times each semester, depending on the type of programming that they had planned.

The original Cultural Diversity Task Force goals and objectives were:

Goals:

1. All employees of the Platte Campus will be participating in and/or supporting cultural diversity activities.
2. The campus and community will have established joint efforts in educating those in leadership roles to the necessary changes that must take place in the workplace.
3. Achievements will be shared with the other two campuses, and activities on an area level will be coordinated.

Objectives:

1. Campus staff, faculty, and administrators will be involved in personal cultural diversity awareness efforts. They will attend at least one of the following: all-campus activity; all-campus workshop; all-campus speaker presentation.
2. Through cooperative efforts, staff, faculty, and administrators will find ways to identify and meet the needs of the institution's diverse student population.
3. The campus will affect community awareness and participation through all forms of media and by invitation to and involvement in as many campus diversity activities as possible.

Calendar of Activities for 1991-1992

The Committee sponsored a variety of diversity activities in 1991-1992.

- June 1991. Area-wide meeting in Grand Island. Overview of Beacon Grant, guest speakers, Michael R. Losey, President, Society for Human Resource Management in Washington, D.C., and Dr. Bill Podraza, City Manager of Lexington, Nebraska.
- August 1991. The Area College Cabinet agreed to allot $5000 to be used for the enhancement of cultural diversity (C/D).
- September 1991. First ethnic lunch was served on campus, a Mexican Fiesta Buffet. Conversational Spanish began this semester; the response was exhilarating.
- October 1991. Dr. Richard Gilliland, President, Metropolitan Community College, was our guest speaker. His speech was entitled, "Beyond Affirmative Action: Leadership Diversity that Works."
- October 1991. Shizuo Nakamura, Japanese exchange visitor, arrived in Columbus. He not only studied the customs of midwest America, he also taught a six week course entitled "Conversational Japanese" on two of our three campuses.
- October 1991. Dr. Murray Jackson, Professor from the University of Michigan and a published poet, presented an address on the need for cultural diversity in our classrooms and on our campus.
- October 1991. Teleconference on "Cultural Diversity in Teacher Preparation and Assessment."
- November 1991. Goals and objectives for cultural diversity on the Platte Campus were identified.
- November 1991. Sharri Fletcher from the Omaha Police Department-Youth Intervention Unit, spoke to students, faculty, and staff. This was co-sponsored by the Counseling Center, Residential Life Department, and Cultural Diversity Task Force.

- November 1991. This month's meal highlight was an Oriental Cuisine Buffet.
- January 1992. Three films, with emphasis on the role of women in leadership positions in business, were featured at a Popcorn Forum sponsored by the Gender Issues Committee.
- February 1992. The College Cabinet adopted the Diversity Task Force Mission Statement:

  > The mission of the Diversity Task Force is to identify opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of Central Community College in performing its role and mission by recognizing, supporting and valuing differences among individuals and the variety of contributions they make to the community.

- February 1992. The College Cabinet integrated the diversity philosophy statement into the current CCC philosophy statement:

  > Central Community College is committed to fostering human diversity within the college community. This commitment stems from the conviction that diversity is essential to creating an intellectual and social climate which promotes the freedom of thought, innovation and creativity that are fundamental to an academic community. Further, Central Community College has a responsibility to acknowledge this diversity and to nurture the sensitivity and mutual respect that are necessary characteristics of a community.

- February 1992. NETCHE teleconference "Sexual Harassment," sponsored by Gender Issues Committee.
- February 1992. Bette Novit Evans, Associate Professor from Creighton University, came to campus with her presentation entitled, "Are You a Member of a Protected Class?" This was co-sponsored by the Nebraska Humanities Council and the Gender Equity Committee.
- February 1992. Dr. Oyekan Owomoyele, Professor of African Literature in the English Dept. at the University of Nebraska-Omaha Campus, was a guest speaker. His presentation was entitled "Culturally Diversifying the Curriculum."
- February 1992. Attorney Tom Maul addressed Legal Issues in Higher Education. He spoke to faculty, staff, and administration regarding the issues that pertained to the Platte campus.
- March 1992. Women's month was targeted by a display of pictures and script of women who have led our country with their determination, leadership, and strength.
- March 1992. Performing as "Woman in History," 12 Platte Campus female students played the parts of famous women in history.
- March 1992. Students form a Multi-Cultural Diversity Task Force. Geno Venegas, freshman at the Platte Campus, chairs this committee.
- April 1992. Careers for women was the theme. Doris Lux, Director of Cooperative Education and member of the Gender Issues Committee, designed the "Popcorn

Forum's" schedule of films for this month. The series was entitled "Changing Careers."

- April 1992. Hal S. Bertilson, Dean of the College of Natural and Social Sciences at the University of Nebraska, Kearney Campus, spoke to faculty, staff, administrators, and area business people and educators on human aggression. His presentation was entitled, "Sexual Harassment on Campus."
- May 1992. Committee was selected and began work on the All-Campus Fall In-service, which took place on our campus.
- May 1992. Graduation, Platte Campus, and Shizuo Nakamura, our Japanese exchange visitor, received an honorary degree from Central Community College.

Along with the above events, the members of the cultural diversity task force often did daily talk spots on our local radio station, KLIR, and did presentations on our local cable network.

In-Service Day (October 29, 1992)

The 330 CCC Staff were introduced to the diversity theme by Professor Liz Hawthorne of the University of Toledo, who had been instrumental in producing a 30-minute tape entitled "Succeeding in Culturally and Racially Diverse Environments." Liz described some of the students and community college staff in the tape and then showed the entire tape.

All staff had been sent diversity T-shirts prior to the In-Service. The logo for the T-shirt had been designed by a Platte drafting major (Ed Eaton) in a college-wide contest. The vast majority of staff wore the shirts you see us wearing today at the NCA Annual Meeting.

Staff normally anticipate In-Service opportunities with something less than rampant enthusiasm. Heeding one of their concerns, we organized the staff into peer groups so that people in like positions were in the small groups for the diversity exercise. Among the groups were Community Education/ABE, Learning Resources, Nursing, Business, Human Services, Maintenance, Student Services, Accounting, etc.

The Diversity Committee's first task was to select from the workbook that accompanied the University of Michigan tape an activity they adapted. The activity selected involved what most would consider inappropriate behavior (dysfunctional behavior) exhibited by college staff or witnessed by college staff vis-a-vis diverse students/staff. The second task for the committee was to gather a group of 22 facilitators to conduct the small peer group sessions (groups ranged from 10-25 members). The brainstorming to select facilitators was itself worthwhile as the committee was pleasantly surprised at how diverse the community already was. Group facilitators included two Hispanic students from Platte, an Hispanic manager from a power company, the Columbus Mayor, an Italian engineer from a manufacturing company in Columbus, a Greek technician from a power company, a Chinese executive assistant from a swine unit company, a Filipino nurse who is a Platte alumna, an Hispanic baseball player from the San Diego Padres system, a Black Platte employee (also a Chicago

transplant alluded to earlier), and a variety of community leaders—a Minister, the Chamber of Commerce executive, an Investment Broker, and several Platte Administrators.

Key to the success of the In-Service was a training session for each facilitator prior to the In-Service. The entire group of facilitators went through the Dysfunctional Behavior Exercise that CCC staff experienced. Facilitators shared experiences they had had that involved dysfunctional behavior—be it performing industrial recruitment, changing schools, carrying out career assignments, etc.

On the day of the In-Service, the small groups had lunch together at scattered sites around the campus. After lunch, the facilitators joined their small groups and conducted one hour of the exercise. Sal Soltero, the minor league baseball player, was especially creative in that he started with a diversity quiz; the three winners each received an autographed baseball card.

Each group handed in a summary of salient comments from the exercise. It was interesting to note that when the entire CCC staff returned to the theatre, there was still buzzing of conversation at 2:15 p.m. Usually by this time of day of In-Service, the staff is edging toward the door for rides home to Hastings (100 miles) or Grand Island (75 miles). This was not the case; this is why we believe this exercise can be easily replicated in other colleges.

Liz Hawthorne gave a brief summary of the day and the In-Service concluded with a short speech by a local attorney relative to legal issues and diversity. We suggest more time for total group interaction after the small group exercise with reports from a panel of facilitators.

Where We Are At and Where We Are Going

The Cultural Diversity Task Force evolved into a permanent committee. A resolution to become a part of the Platte Campus Advisory and Communication System (Campus Council) passed in September of 1992. Inclusion into the process of reviewing and formulating the college's policies and procedures has given the committee the credibility, visibility, and access to the college's leadership that it needed to become an effective change agent.

Through in-service activities, speakers, teleconferences, etc., the present committee has adopted and pursued the following goals:

1. Encourage the development of different teaching styles to accommodate learning styles and the needs of special populations through instructor training and faculty and student communication forums.
2. Educate present and future employers/employees about diversity issues.
3. Promote a proactive role in the recruitment and retention of a diverse population of employees/students.
4. Continue to stimulate multicultural/diversity awareness within the college and community.

5. Continue to strive to create within our own institution, the community and area businesses/industry supportive environments where the uniqueness of the whole person is valued and each is encouraged to reach his/her full potential as a student, family member, employee, actualized person, citizen, and member of a global society.

This last fall we were given an opportunity to educate the CCC Board of Governors about diversity and activities that have occurred on all three campuses. Two of our in-service facilitators (a male Hispanic student and a Black female employee) explained the All-College In-Service activities and what the In-Service and being part of the day meant to them. The Board was presented with the In-Service materials, comments from the activity, and personal copies of the book, *Beyond Race and Gender,* by Roosevelt Thomas. The Board's reaction to the presentation was positive.

The committee appreciates the role that the college plays in shaping attitudes and cultivating tolerance. We are constant in our attentiveness to find ways to weave some aspect of celebrating and valuing our diversity and our similarities into everything that occurs on campus.

Kathryn Ballobin *is Office Technology Instructor at Platte Campus-Central Community College, Columbus, NE*

Pete Rush *is Campus President at Platte Campus-Central Community College, Columbus, NE*

Jan Wisialowski *is Cultural Diversity Chairperson at Platte Campus-Central Community College, Columbus, NE*

A Senate is a Senate is a Senate...?

Daniel J. LaVista
Jean V. Kartje
M. Cheena Wade
Steven McCarthy
Sally M. Ericson

In 1969, the College of Lake County was built on the prairies north of Chicago, minutes from the Wisconsin border. Developed as the result of a grassroots effort by area residents, the college was founded and matured through the teamwork and energy of many people contributing their best thinking and efforts to living out an educational dream.

To structure employee input into decisions during the formative years, the college established an All-College Senate. This forum had representatives from every employee group who met regularly to discuss issues of concern. It was very stimulating to have faculty and staff, custodians and vice presidents sitting in the same meeting, struggling with the same issues. But it was also balanced in favor of academic issues and concerns. Faculty members, skilled in public debate and group processes, could easily sway an argument or demand attention to curricular issues over the less heady suggestions for community development, partnerships with business and industry, or working conditions that concerned other employee groups.

In 1987, the college had grown from a handful of employees working on card tables in one temporary building to more than 1000 people scattered over two campuses, one educational center, and fifty extension sites in the district. The All-College Senate had lived out its usefulness, and governance had to be restructured to keep pace with a changing institution.

A group of ten people from various employee groups was charged to examine different governance structures and to propose a model to meet the distinctive needs of the College of Lake County. This group ultimately recommended a system composed of four groups—the Classified Senate, Specialist Senate, Faculty Senate, and Student Senate. A fifth body—the Governance Coordinating Council (GCC)—was charged with the organization of special committees to serve college-wide interests, and the facilitation of communication between and among the four Senates and with the college administration. It was decided that the senate

structure was not appropriate for administrative and professional staff members. Since the proposed governance system was designed to have an equalizing effect for those individuals involved, it was envisioned that faculty, specialists, classified staff, and students would deal with issues and concerns as colleagues within the new senate structure. The hierarchical nature of the administrative and professional staff system was viewed by some as potentially inhibiting and maybe counterproductive to the open debate that was seen as the basis of governance at the college. In lieu of a formal senate, the college President developed monthly opportunities for administrative and professional staff to discuss ideas and college-wide initiatives.

With the Senates and the Council, four Commissions focus their attention upon specific areas of particular interest. These are the Curriculum Commission, the Facilities Use and Planning Commission, the Professional Growth Commission, and the Student Life Commission. Each Commission advises a designated administrative office.

Each Senate functions under its own constitution and by-laws based upon the unique characteristics of its membership. The Faculty Senate, for instance, calls for representatives from various academic divisions; the smallest employee group, the specialists, selects Senate representatives from nominations received from the group as a whole.

The Senates develop their independent annual agendas and themes, and share their focus through the Governance Coordinating Council. They also are informed of Board initiatives and administrative actions through the GCC. This link allows each group to provide feedback or become involved in issues that are raised and primarily addressed by other groups. Therefore, when the students saw a need to revise the faculty evaluation system, the Student Senate leadership asked for a place on the Faculty Senate agenda. While the faculty took the lead in developing the model for the evaluation process, the Student Senate representatives were kept informed and regularly attended appropriate meetings to express their ideas and solicit additional student reactions to the developing process. Further, when the Classified Senate began to promote a cooperative program in which special education high school students would gain work experience at the college, the project was able to solicit early reactions and support.

The roles and responsibilities of the governance system are clear. The model encourages participation of employees and students in the formulation, implementation and review of college goals, policies, and procedures. Each Senate is encouraged to raise and consider issues and opportunities that affect its unique relationship with the college or the college community as a whole. Senates are not, however, involved in specific matters covered in collective bargaining contracts or with grievances that are handled through a separate system.

At the College of Lake County, the faculty and the custodial/grounds segment of the classified employee group are organized in a bargaining unit; other classified employees and the specialist employees are not represented by a union. The latter groups, however, are offered an opportunity to provide input into the Board of Trustees' salary and policy decisions influencing their compensation, benefits, and work conditions through an ad hoc committee. This group works for a short period of time each year, and makes its recommendations to the

President. In addition, the group is given a formal opportunity to speak directly with the Board of Trustees regarding compensation concerns. While this system has provided some good dialogue, the current Classified and Specialist Senate Chairs are examining alternatives that might move the organization of salary and policy discussions outside of the governance system.

The Senate structure of the College of Lake County is recognized as only one branch of the decision-making process. Policy decisions are rightly the purview of the Board of Trustees. Operations are managed through the leadership of the college administration. The Board and administration value the thinking and experience of employees and students who operate in different organizational systems and thus have varied—and valuable—perspectives on issues that affect the college. This respect and nurturing of the governance system in an organized fashion, and at all levels, is essential to the success of the system.

Students and employees who are active in the governance system recognize that they have meaningful opportunities for input into the college's decision-making process. The system is considered efficient, because each Senate may elect to become involved in those issues that are important to its constituency. There is also a "bad news/good news" perception related to the efficiency of the system. In the words of one Senate leader: "By giving more employees (and students) that meaningful input, the decision-making process is slowed down and in that sense is less efficient. Still, when decisions are made with all of the employee (and student) input that now exists, there is general consensus. Additionally, employees are well-informed of the issues and do not believe that the decision was made only by the college's administration." In this view, the time taken to make decisions certainly is justified in light of the involvement of many people.

There are other positive aspects for people who become involved in college leadership through the governance system. Communication with members of other employee groups and direct interaction with the college President are often cited. The assurance that people affected by decisions are represented at the beginning of the decision-making process is another. Finally, the fact that *all* members of the college community have an opportunity for a voice in decision-making, whether they elect to use that voice or not, is exciting. However, the governance system, like most good processes and programs, requires constant attention and hard work to maintain its success.

And, to be sure, the College of Lake County governance system has provided some good feedback and generated some wonderful ideas and programs over the past few years. A short list of accomplishments must include:

- The review of a proposal to develop a new campus in the district.
- A review (and rejection) of a merit pay concept.
- The establishment of a new system for student evaluation of instruction.
- The research and planning for an employee mentoring program spearheaded by specialist employees and the application of the quality circles concept for classified employees.

- The review and acceptance of new admissions and degree requirements for the Associate of Arts and Associate of Science degrees.
- Annual review of the academic calendar and governance system.
- Structured opportunities for social interaction and new employee orientation.
- The involvement of the college as a worksite for students in the special education district "Work Crew" program.

The success of the College of Lake County governance system is founded in the principles embedded in the introduction to the governance handbook. This handbook contains the constitutions of the various senates, and outlines the rights, responsibilities, functions, and philosophies that underlie this system for input into decision-making at the College of Lake County. The introduction reads:

> Governance is a communication structure which allows good ideas a place to surface; the solicitation of multiple opinions or feedback in an efficient manner; and a forum for the consideration of various concerns by a broad and representative group. The governance system at the College of Lake County is built upon the knowledge that college students and staff value the opportunity to be actively involved in the decision-making processes of the college. Further, it is believed that multiple groups formed around similar interests, experiences, and concerns will most competently and completely address the varied issues of the college. In addition, the governance system endorses action based upon mutual respect, good faith, and commitment to the best interests of the college as a whole.

Daniel J. LaVista *is President at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL*

Jean V. Kartje *is Executive Assistant to the President at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL*

M. Cheena Wade *is Faculty Senate Chair and Instructor in Biology/Health Sciences Division at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL*

Steven McCarthy *is Specialist Senate Chair and Technical Writer/Special Events Coordinator at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL*

Sally M. Ericson *is Classified Senate Chair and Senior Clerk, Technical Processing, Learning Resource Center at College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL*

Building Constructive Relationships Through Bargaining

R. Ernest Dear
Robert L. Bender
Linda E. Flickinger

With more than 800 colleges and universities engaged in collective bargaining nationwide, bargaining is a fact of life on campus today. On many campuses, bargaining has been successfully integrated into campus processes in a way that strengthens and supports institutional goals. Unfortunately, on other campuses, an adversarial relationship has developed, leading to periodic, if not constant, conflict.

In 1981, *Getting to YES: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In*, by Roger Fisher and William Ury of the Harvard Negotiation Project was published, and the era of "win-win" bargaining dawned. In higher education, James Begin, Robert Birnbaum, and Bert Brown developed Mutual Gains Bargaining (MGB) to help colleges improve the quality of their bargaining and promote institutional development.

There are several reasons why administrators and unions should give careful consideration to Mutual Gains Bargaining. First, it emphasizes collaboration rather than competition. Second, it is more personally satisfying to participants. Third, when faculty and administrators treat each other as colleagues rather than adversaries, it is more likely to lead to more productive future relationships. Finally, and most important, both parties are likely to get more of what they want.

Mutual gains bargaining is a structured, monitored approach composed of certain core elements, including:

1. mutual acceptance of the legitimacy of each side's needs and priorities;
2. minimization of coercion and exploitation;

3. reliance on "positive influence" techniques;
4. expansion of the range of alternative solutions to issues being negotiated;
5. development of mutually-accepted rules for carrying out negotiations; and
6. focus on long-term understandings of gains and costs of bargaining, both in terms of the resolution of issues and in terms of the development of collaborative relationships.

MGB requires a high level of discipline and skill; it is tougher and more demanding than traditional bargaining. It is not an alternative to collective bargaining nor is it an effort to co-opt unions, limit management rights, or reduce faculty power. Mutual gains bargaining is not a soft approach to bargaining. Instead, as a method for improving collective bargaining, MGB assists both sides in increasing their influence and improving their outcomes.

St. Clair County Community College: A Case Study

- **Negotiating an MGB Contract.** St. Clair County Community College (Port Huron, MI) is a college where collective bargaining, which began in 1968, has become an increasingly adversarial process, leading to tremendous bitterness on both sides. Finally, in 1985, both the College and the faculty agreed that something had to be done. Mutual Gains Bargaining was the answer, and St. Clair County Community College has now negotiated three faculty contracts using Mutual Gains Bargaining—one of the few institutions in higher education to have negotiated that many contracts using the MGB approach.

  Using Mutual Gains Bargaining has led to the negotiation of contracts in a four-to-six week period, and the last three contracts have been ratified prior to the expiration of the existing agreement. This means the fall semester begins with a contract firmly in place, and there has been time for both sides to begin the process of implementation. Certainly, the process has not been without difficulties, but there has been the commitment on both sides to use the skills learned during MGB training to work out these difficulties.

- **Maintaining an MGB Contract: Extending the Process Between Contracts.** Perhaps the most unique aspect of bargaining at St. Clair County Community College is that the College is one of only approximately five institutions in higher education nationwide to operate with an "open" contract—that is, using a continuous problem-solving approach *between* contract negotiations. This approach has evolved gradually since the first MGB contract in 1985, and is a natural outgrowth of the problem-solving process used during negotiations.

  Representatives of the administration and the faculty meet monthly in the Professional Rights and Responsibilities (P. R. & R.) Committee. This committee does a variety of things, such as handling unresolved issues that were delegated to the committee or other special committees from the contract negotiations, considering new issues that are not covered by the contract, and, as part of the problem-solving process, evaluating solutions

that were incorporated into the contract to see whether or not they are working. Essentially, the committee deals with issues in one of three ways: developing a Letter of Agreement, proposing new language for ratification, or deciding no change is needed.

- **MGB: Advantages and Disadvantages.** There are several advantages to having an "open" contract. First, resolving issues as they arise, it prevents problems from festering and becoming bigger as they would if left until the next contract negotiations. Second, an "open" contract reduces the number of issues to be negotiated and the Letters of Agreement need only be incorporated into the new Agreement. Finally, the monthly meetings help keep the focus on working collaboratively, rather than in an adversarial manner. If mutual gains bargaining is something that is done only every two or three years, it is difficult to make the process work. Practicing continuous problem-solving makes contract negotiations much less difficult.

  Of course, there are pitfalls. First, with an open contract, there is always the temptation to "take a second bite of the apple": if an individual (or a group) did not like the outcome of negotiations on a particular issue, it can be raised again between contracts. Second, because the committee working between contracts meets only monthly, issues can drag on and on without resolution. There is not the intense focus typical of actual negotiations. Third, there is the temptation to say, when things are not working smoothly, "you're not using MGB!" Everyone has his or her interpretation of the process, and over time, these interpretations tend to surface and become more disparate. Finally, without the focus provided by an end point (such as contract expiration), it is easier for individuals or groups to delay resolution of problems simply by failing to do the work required.

  Undeniably, there are problems with mutual gains bargaining. Despite these problems, however, using mutual gains bargaining can lead to some dramatic changes. In particular, bargainers do not act like regular bargainers: they do not line up on opposite sides, each side tries very hard to listen to what the other side is saying, and the atmosphere is more comfortable, leaving no (or few) personal antagonisms behind. Another benefit of MGB is that both sides learn a great deal about the institution. Both sides also get to know each other better, and negotiations do not produce the bitterness typical of traditional bargaining. Finally, specific gains are made in the contract—specific problems are resolved.

In summary, MGB can perhaps best be described as a rational process being imposed on an irrational process. The changes that occur may be small—particularly at first—but that may be what is needed—small, incremental changes. MGB is not easy, but the returns justify the effort.

R. Ernest Dear *is President of St. Clair County Community College, Port Huron, MI*

Robert L. Bender *is Executive Assistant to the President, St. Clair County Community College, Port Huron, MI*

Linda E. Flickinger *is Faculty Union President and Professor of Psychology, St. Clair County Community College, Port Huron, MI*

Chapter V

Envisioning the Future

The Rise of Computer Conferencing Courses and Online Education: Challenges for Accreditation and Assessment

Edward D. Garten
Terri Hedegaard

Computer conferencing is among the newest and most exciting approaches to instruction to emerge within recent years. It has been suggested that the "most powerful argument for computer conferencing rests...on its ability to empower the professor and students to interact with each other rapidly and extemporaneously, to gather together around the electronic table those people who wish to participate and...communicate with anyone else in the group — each doing so at his or her convenience" (McNeil, 1989:18). And as Lynton and Elman have argued, these technologies have brought a "renewed attention to the process of learning and teaching" (1987: 122).

Models of Online Education

The merging of computers and telecommunications in the early 1970's has resulted in the increased use of computer conferencing for academic use. The educational use of computer conferencing is commonly referred to as online education and can be broadly distinguished by the following characteristics: 1) each student is physically alone with a computer attached to a telephone line, via modem; 2) participants enter their comments on the computer, in lieu of speaking, and read the entries sent by others, in lieu of listening; and 3) computer software organizes the text-based communication into structural components to assume the virtual qualities of a classroom or campus.

Upon reviewing online education programs from a variety of academic institutions, the authors found that the models in current use may be subsumed under three categories. Among

the various institutions conducting online education programs the use of these models can range substantially. On one end of the spectrum, a single model is used. At the other end, there is a diverse blending of models and media. While some institutions have developed sophisticated approaches for offering complete degree programs through online education, others offer only single courses restricted to specific disciplines.

- **The Collaborative Model.** This model is dependent upon asynchronous, i.e., not real-time, communication. Analogous to voice-mail or e-mail, the students or faculty use their computers and modems to send messages and to retrieve their responses at a later time. Because students and faculty are not all on the computer system at the same time there is a delay between leaving a message or discussion item and receiving a response to it. In contrast to voice-mail or e-mail, however, communication in the collaborative model of instruction is many-to-many, rather than one-to-one. While these systems can accommodate private messages between individuals, most of the discussion items are sent to a group forum for all to view and provide comment. Courses operating under this model are designed heavily around group discussion, problem-solving, and collaboration.

- **The Traditional Model.** This model is based on the lecture tradition and is generally blended with independent study. Based on both synchronous and asynchronous communication, there is opportunity for immediate online feedback. In this model, portions of instruction occur via computer and modem between a single instructor and his or her student. While students mostly work independently, they have the advantage of easily available interaction with their instructor. Other portions of instruction occur during scheduled lectures that are conducted with a group of students who are all connected via computer and modem simultaneously. The traditional model is not highly dependent upon group discussion and collaboration because the portion of learning conducted in groups is focused on the faculty lecture.

- **The Independent Study Model.** This model is grounded in the traditional independent study format where students work independently with an instructor to achieve the course objectives. With the advent of computer conferencing, textual information once relayed through the mail, is transmitted with the speed of a telephone call through the computer. In this model the computer system can be a vital link between isolated students and campus services

- **Other Uses of Computer Conferencing Within Academe.** Computer conferencing is frequently employed as a supplemental communication device for courses taken in the traditional manner on campus, or as a supplement to other distance education media. As a component medium, it is often used to extend class-related interactions between students and faculty; link both campus-based and "distance" students; increase availability of faculty outside of their teaching and office hours; and provide a place for people to socialize and remain connected to the university. Computer conferencing can provide faculty, students, and administrators with access to a range of university services such as learning resources, counseling, financial aid, and even the bookstore. Beyond services, it is particularly intriguing

for professional or scholarly collaboration. The ability to communicate without the constraints of time and place enable geographically dispersed individuals to engage in collegial exchange.

The University of Phoenix and Other Documented Successes

In 1986 the University of Phoenix (UOP) began research and development efforts focused on refining a working system of collaborative online education for working adults. The interactive qualities of online education were a natural complement to the adult learning model the University already employed in its campus-based business programs. UOP's online program has been operational since 1989 and currently has one of the largest student populations among programs of this type.

At around the same time UOP began developing its online education program, it also began a comprehensive, institution-wide system for measuring academic quality and adult learning outcomes in both its campus and distance programs. During the years of implementation, these data have been used (among many other purposes) to compare the cognitive and affective gains between students in its campus programs and the online program. According to a report produced in 1992 by UOP's Institutional Research Department, the academic performance of students in the online program was as good or better than that of its classroom-based students in both quantitative and non-quantitative areas. Data were also analyzed on the development of students' professional values. None of the data indicated that there was a meaningful point of differentiation between the UOP campus-based and online students.

In the same research report, UOP faculty who taught courses in both classroom and online programs were asked to complete surveys comparing a number of factors from both programs. The results indicated that faculty appeared to be very satisfied with the quality of the online students and with the overall educational environment. They were especially satisfied with online students' academic and professional preparation. Compared to the classroom environment, faculty were somewhat more satisfied with the students' mastery of the course content in the electronic environment. Faculty also rated the written communication skills of online students higher than the classroom students they teach. The academic success demonstrated by graduates of the UOP online program was critical for determining the long-term viability of the program. It is believed that overall success of this online education program has been achieved by: carefully matching the curriculum design to the selected computer conferencing media; designing the program to be highly structured, with deadline dates for assignments and clear expectations established for student participation and achievement; developing proactive systems for maintaining frequent contact with students and faculty; requiring stringent faculty selection and training criteria; and by designing a curriculum with clearly established course goals and outcomes all based on a collaborative, problem-solving approach to learning.

Another comparison study was conducted at the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition, University of California at San Diego (Quinn, Mehan, Levin, and Black, 1983). These researchers focused on the content and context properties of the electronic message

discussion in contrast to face-to-face discussion in an educational setting. They found that examination scores between the electronic group and the face-to-face group showed no significant differences.

At the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Hsu (1990) compared the achievement of students in an online class and a face-to-face class by evaluating their success in learning to make business decisions. When both groups were given a business simulation project to complete, the online group fared better by some 50%. Hsu noted that the most significant difference between the two groups was in their cohension. The online students were better coordinated and more collaborative when working on the project.

Challenges to Assessment

While we might like to think so, quality is not a well-defined topic in higher education. With respect to distance education in general the quality of a program has been ascertained largely by making judgments on the quality of materials used in the program, the suitability of the mode of distance education used to the subject being taught, the provision of education versus mere instruction, and the cost-benefits and value-added to students of such instruction (Keegan and Rumble, 1982).

Many traditional educators have experienced some difficulty in both recognizing the validity of, and applying assessment techniques to, the electronic classroom. It is not uncommon to hear traditional educators express the concern that computer-mediated programs or other electronic delivery programs may not have the same high level of dialogue found in comparable on-ground programs. As Tucker (1991) has observed, some evaluators of electronic programs may have little objective knowledge of the level of dialogue in their own universities or any university. Without any experiential base from which to make judgments, Tucker suggests, how can the evaluator of an electronic program contend that that program has a lower level of dialogue? Indeed, many of our traditional notions of assessment of on-ground, face-to-face instruction may be turned on their heads after we explore the context of the electronic environment.

Tucker suggests a number of premises that may assist evaluators of the electronic university and online education. First, he notes that learning involves essential transactions between the learner and his or her world. Because reality is created by reasoning about and acting on the external environment, the exteriorization of the learning process holds important implications for computer conferencing. Following from this, Tucker notes that "the transactions of learning constitute the most empirically assessable place to study the nature of learning processes and outcomes" (1991:5). Online education offers one of the best places to study such questions as: What questions do participants in an online conference ask? How are these questions framed? How many questions are asked and when? What does the underlying structure of a wrong answer (and perhaps an ill-formed question) reveal about the participant's world? And how do participant's questions and answers (indeed, the quality of their overall dialogue) change over the progression of the online course? Learning transactions that are mediated by computer hardware and software provide a unique opportunity to reflect on the process of individual student interaction in a course. Tucker maintains that, taken as a whole,

"the electronic university is routinely a far more scrutable educational environment than the traditional classroom" (1991:6).

The approach to the assessment of online learning environments may well require that we ask different questions. Among those questions might be included: How do students relate to each other in this mode of instruction? How do moderators and facilitators relate to participants in this new environment? What changes take place in these relationships over the life of the course? While it is important to state the learning objectives and course outcomes, Tucker has noted that the electronic learning environment allows us to measure and "analyze diverse quantitative indices such as dialogue time, direction, and pattern that, together, might provide more indications bearing on the qualitative learning experience" (1991:7).

Challenges to On-Site Visitors

Consultant-evaluators of electronic online programs are urged to defer judgment of such programs based solely on initial impressions of "level of dialogue" compared to more traditional modes of classroom instruction. Indeed, this question has rarely been studied in American higher education and has certainly never been studied comprehensively. To assume that "level of dialogue" and interaction in an online environment is somehow lower than in a face-to-face classroom is specious and unfounded reasoning unless, obtained from archival dialogue, there is objective evidence to the contrary. Online programs that are grounded in sound instructional design and that exhibit strong academic support systems pose wholly new learning environments for many consultant-evaluators. Judgments on such programs, where those judgments are referenced largely to classroom-based, face-to-face experience, should be deferred until all evidence in support of the electronic program is weighed. Evaluators should concentrate, instead, on an assessment of the design, sequencing, and structuring elements of the online education effort since experience with online group activities suggests that designing and structuring the learning environment are perhaps more essential for online collaboration than for more traditional counterparts (Harasim, 1988).

Consultant-evaluators of online education programs will need to schedule more time during their visit for discussions with moderators of these programs since the available literature would suggest that, in programs where the conference moderator took a more active role in guiding online discussions, in floating ideas for group consideration, and in synthesizing and summarizing discussions, the levels of participation and student satisfaction were significantly higher (Harasim and Winkelmans, 1990). In addition to direct conversations with individual conference moderators, evaluators are urged to review course transcripts or dialogue from courses in progress. Evaluators should be cautioned, however, that the review of transcripts is not to pass judgment on the "level of interaction," or the caliber of the moderator (instructor qualifications are verified by other means). Rather, they should look for evidence of course structure and design, student and faculty participation, and whether or not the dialogue is focused on meeting the stated course objectives.

At other times consultant-evaluators are prone to suggest that distance education programs supported by electronic media have the potential of being narrowly focused on specified course material, and allow for little incorporation of outside resources. Evaluators should

take care not to prejudge programs in this area. Better online programs will invite student participants to share references to, and observations about, resources and readings pertinent to the course. Indeed, in online programs geared toward working adults, one should expect a high level of appropriate natural "peer-critiquing" of the value of these resources to the quality of the class.

Upon reviewing course transcripts, evaluators should expect to see greater quantities of student dialogue than faculty input. Much has been written about the interactive and collaborative benefits possible in online education. Both Harasim (1989) and Quinn, Mehan, Levin, and Black (1983) found that most of the verbal exchanges in face-to-face classrooms come from the teacher, while the reverse is true online. Harasim's research indicated that in an active online learner-to-learner exchange, between 60-80% of the verbal exchange in an online class comes from the students. Quinn, et al, noted that students in their electronic classroom system produced longer and more complex responses than in the classroom groups they compared. All of these researchers note that the time-delay in asynchronous communication contributes to the quality and quantity of student interaction. They report that the delay between receiving a message and sending a response allows reflection and the time to compose a substantive answer.

Another challenge that online education poses to program evaluation surrounds notions of time spent on tasks associated with the course. There is little question that many of those who select this mode of instruction do so because of the convenience that it allows for participants at any time of the day or week. Evaluators coming from more traditional instructional environments need to take care that they do not associate customary "seat time" attendance conventions to the online class. Because the unique characteristics of this medium literally make the notion of seat-time vanish, evaluators might be surprised to learn that many student participants in computer conferencing programs actually spend more interactive time with their course than do students in a face-to-face classroom environment. With a demanding moderator, there may be significantly more opportunities for a deeper and broader exploration and analysis of course issues.

Harasim (1989) has found that communication in an interactive online class is more equitably distributed among class members, whereas a conventional classroom frequently has one or two students dominating the discussion while the majority remain silent. She also concludes that the text-based quality of online learning facilitates the review of previous comments and discussion, and for providing a focus on the important ideas and concepts: "the archived transcript invites organizing and reorganizing of the corpus of ideas contained within it, thereby enabling purposeful, active cognitive interaction with the content" (1989:60). Again, consultant-evaluators are urged to explore this issue through interviews with prior and present online students and through analysis of archived course dialogue.

New Questions for Members of Evaluation Teams

The rise of online education necessarily raises a number of new questions for which consultant-evaluators should be seeking answers while reviewing self-studies and, then, while visiting on-site. These questions include:

1. Does the program have an instructional designer on staff who brings specialized experience in the design of electronic and interactive instructional programs? If such a person is not on staff, is a person or persons with this expertise readily available on a consultant basis?

2. Who on the program staff is charged with the resolution of technical problems when they occur with the system? In what manner does this person interact with current students working in the electronic conferencing mode? Is there evidence from students (records in logbooks, team member interviews with students) that technical problems are resolved rapidly and competently?

3. Who is the person(s) who moderates the electronic conferences?

4. Is there evidence that individual courses offered under the electronic conferencing mode have carefully stated tasks that must be accomplished, clear deadlines, and a shared culture or knowledge base?

5. Are student participants clear on the purpose of collaboration in the ongoing life of the online class? Do students see their individual efforts at collaboration and collegiality as critical to the success of the conference?

6. Do the online courses exhibit clearly stated objectives? Is it apparent to the reviewer that there is a need for greater course structure?

7. Is there evidence that moderators are responsive to queries or other messages from student participants?

8. Is there evidence of integration whereby students organize and manage the array of data and information pouring forth in the computer conference environment?

9. How are students screened for admission into the course or program? Is the program or course appropriate for the student population for which it is targeted? Such questions are especially important in online education programs that have many younger or less self-motivated students.

10. Are appropriate counseling services available to students? Are additional learning resources offered students, including access to and delivery of traditional library resources? Is there evidence of effective administration of these programs, e.g., record keeping, equipment acquisition and maintenance, adequate support staff, and provision for at least a minimal level of hard-copy archiving of selected course dialogue?

Conclusion

Computer mediated communication systems, especially successful online programs as envisioned and developed by such institutions as the University of Phoenix and others, introduce unprecedented opportunities for new ways of assessment. These programs present evaluators with the opportunity to explore new ways of viewing instructional design issues, the effect of communications technologies on group interaction, and a host of issues

evaluators with the opportunity to explore new ways of viewing instructional design issues, the effect of communications technologies on group interaction, and a host of issues surrounding the support of distributed group learning. External evaluators of such programs, including regional accreditation commission consultant-evaluators, should be especially alert to indicators of the strength of interdisciplinary collaboration that may arise from effective electronic learning efforts. In addition, computer mediated communication technologies provide new instructional opportunities that overcome time and distance boundaries in unique ways. Advances in hypertext and in computer conferencing system connectivity to online bibliographic and information resources will create more sophisticated systems in the future.

Online education is innovative by design. Such programs must continually innovate if they are to enhance effectiveness and provide new levels of insight into more adequate and appropriate means of assessment and evaluation.

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Edward D. Garten *is Director of University Libraries and Professor at University of Dayton, Dayton, OH*

Terri Hedegaard *is Vice-President ONLINE at University of Phoenix in San Francisco, San Francisco, CA*

New Pathways— Distance Learning by Computer

Sandra Running
Claire McInerney

Accessibility is an important issue for educators who have a firm desire to reach students with diverse abilities and needs. The New Pathways program at the College of St. Catherine is intended to meet the needs of students who find it difficult to attend classes on campus. Through New Pathways students can pursue a degree in their own homes by using their computer, a modem, and a telephone line as well as video and audio tape players. Course materials are distributed using hypertext programs, and students talk to each other, the professor, and scholars around the world using electronic mail and the conferences and discussions available on the Internet.

The College of St. Catherine was founded in 1905 to educate "the New Woman," and its undergraduate college continues to offer programs in both the liberal arts and the professions for women of all ages. With 2700 students currently enrolled, the college has been a leader in designing and implementing innovative educational options for working women and non-traditional aged students. In 1990 St. Catherine was one of seven colleges and universities selected to be part of an Annenberg/Corporation for Public Broadcasting distance education initiative, "New Pathways to a Degree: Using Technology to Open the College."

After ten years of experience operating a successful Weekend College, faculty and administrators knew there were students who were place-bound. For example, mothers with young children who live in outlying areas of Minnesota did not feel comfortable leaving their children for long periods of time while they went off to class. Some women travel in their jobs and could not always anticipate when they would be out of town. Others worked evening shifts at hospitals or other workplaces. Some were simply unaccustomed to driving in city traffic and too frightened to try to do it alone. For these and other reasons the college wanted to serve women in Minnesota, a state with a big geographic area that is largely rural.

Quality was a major issue in designing New Pathways to a Degree courses. Everyone wanted the courses to be equal in rigor and quality to the courses offered in the regular Weekend College, but it was a challenge to keep the quality high without the usual container and structure of a classroom with the professor in front of the class. Information and communi-

cation technologies were employed to create a virtual classroom within the student's own environment.

How New Pathways Works

New Pathways required professors to step into a new paradigm of learning. Instead of being in control of all the communications in the classroom, the teacher in a New Pathways 'classroom' certainly talks to students, but students have equal power in starting a conversation, asking a question, or making a comment. The following examples show how courses were transformed so that students could learn wherever they were:

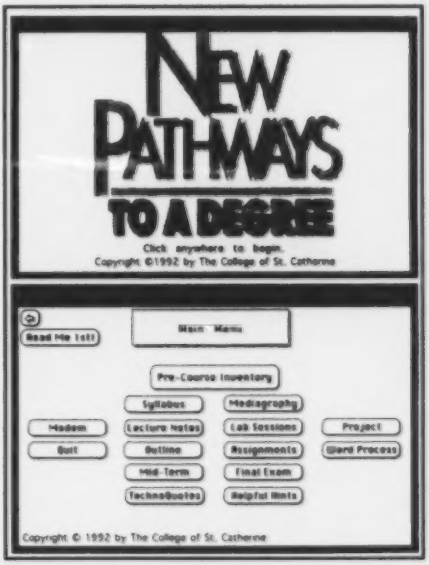
1. Syllabi, assignments, lecture notes, and mediagraphies were placed on hypertext.
2. Classroom discussions, debates, questions, and comments take place on electronic mail and computer conferencing.
3. Small group work takes place by students using distribution lists on electronic mail, reporting to the whole group on the course computer conference.
4. Students check out feature film videos used as sub-texts from their local video store. Information tapes are mailed directly to the students.
5. Electronic library catalogs—the college's as well as those from around the world—are accessed via modem and computer.
6. Students receive electronic journals and talk to students at other colleges and universities by means of the Internet.
7. Quizzes and tests are the open book variety with answers transmitted through electronic mail.
8. Evaluation and critiques are communicated privately through electronic mail from professor to student.

Students are invited to the campus once at the beginning of their coursework in order to complete proficiency tests, receive an introduction to the electronic mail and conferencing system, preview the hypertext course disk, and learn about details such as ordering library materials and textbooks. Because students do not assemble in one place at a specific time, the New Pathways program differs from many other distance education programs. Most distance education programs are video based, requiring the students to travel to a site to view either a taped or live classroom session. Even though the site may be much closer to the student's home than the home campus, traveling to a site at a specified time can be problematic for many students, especially those with responsibilities that preclude traveling to a site. The New Pathways program eliminates these barriers of time and space.

Another difference between a New Pathways course and a traditional on-campus course is that students and faculty in New Pathways consider the world their classroom. Students learn how to find discipline-based discussion groups that attract professors and students from universities around the world. New Pathways participants can talk about nutrition, photogra-

phy, physics, jazz, journalism, or political science. The GRANOLA list is for vegetarian discussions; GEODESIC is a discussion about Buckminster Fuller; CHINANET is a discussion about networking in China. Some students were especially excited when they were able to send and receive messages from the author of their textbook. There are also gateways that allow students and professors to communicate with a vast array of individuals and services such as CompuServe, Dialog Information Services, and the popular WELL service.

In order to take part in the program students need to have a microcomputer (either Macintosh or MS-DOS) with a hard disk drive, a modem, communication software, and a video cassette player. They also must have a copy of hypertext software, either ToolBook for MS-DOS computers or HyperCard for Apple Macintosh. These hardware and software requirements are not high-priced or unusual, but for some students it is an additional step to become technologically ready to take the courses.



The courses available for study include liberal arts and sciences work, such as philosophy, chemistry, English, and history. In addition, more than half of the courses necessary to complete the information management major are available on New Pathways format. One question that remains unanswered is whether some disciplines are more suited to computer-based distance education than others. As the project continues, the collaboration team[1] that guides the work of the New Pathways program will be monitoring the ease and difficulty experienced by students in the program with particular courses and groups of courses.

Issues and Questions

There are other issues the New Pathways Project is addressing. One of these is faculty development. Some faculty members are interested in and willing to join an innovative program such as New Pathways, but they may not have a computer workstation that can accommodate the volume and amount of computer work necessary, and they do not have the expertise in navigating networks and computer conferences in order to handle the communication needed. Extensive faculty development work has been necessary and continues to be on the agenda for New Pathways. Both the project coordinator and the courseware developer have worked closely with faculty, sometimes even going to faculty homes in order to help set up a modem or to walk someone through the courseware. It has become evident that progress in computer based education, and in this case, distance education, cannot be accomplished without faculty commitment and faculty development.

Faculty have also found that redesigning a course for distance students really requires a re-evaluation of the total course content, the readings, activities, and exams. When one is asking the question, "Will students at a distance be able to understand this and learn from this?" one is also forced to ask whether students in the mainstream course section really 'get' everything we think they do. Whenever these basic questions about most appropriate learning methods and materials are raised, there is the potential for even better and improved teaching. All too often these questions about how to maximize learning experiences are not raised in the higher education environment.

Another important question is how students will benefit by taking a computer based course at a distance. Of course, reducing barriers to education will help a student achieve the goal of receiving a degree. There are other benefits that may not be obvious at a glance. In the New Pathways program, students learn computer and information technology skills that they will be able to transfer to marketable job skills. New Pathways students also have the opportunity to talk to the instructor much more than the average in-class student. At any time, day or night, they can key in a question on electronic mail for the instructor to pick up at his or her convenience. There is no artificial limit to the length of question, the time it takes to formulate the question or the frequency with which a student can ask a question. For the shy or reticent student, for the student for whom English is a second language, and for the student who is hearing impaired or has another disability, electronic mail can be a much more liberating way to communicate than the standard, sometimes intimidating classroom.

Some have equated learning with contact hours with the professor. Distance education has shown that students have a great capacity to learn independently with limited contact hours. New Pathways provides plentiful opportunities for both independent learning and contact with faculty; however, the contact is not the same kind that is traditionally available in colleges and universities.

The New Pathways program is a new one, and the final evaluations are not yet in. It is an experiment (a very carefully planned one) and an innovation (based on research and experience), so there are risks. Without taking the risks necessary to launch new educational programs, though, the barriers to higher education will remain in place for students, especially those who live in remote and rural areas. If we believe that geographically-bound students have a right to fair access to an education, we must welcome and embrace new programs, particularly those that build in measures for quality, reliability, and rigor.

[1] The collaboration team that directs the work of the New Pathways Project consists of the project director/director of the Weekend College, the New Pathways coordinator, the courseware developer, two professors in information management, and a former president of the college/English professor.

Sandra Running *is Director of the Weekend College at College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN*

Claire McInerney *is Associate Professor of Information Management at College of St. Catherine St. Paul, MN*

Academic Quality and Telecommunications Delivery

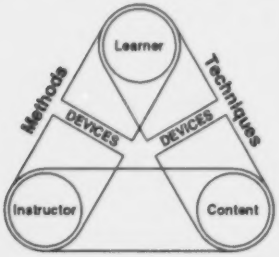
Barbara Audley
C. P. Sword

Academic quality has traditionally been implemented in three ways in higher education: requiring completed doctoral preparation by the faculty member, monitoring contact time between faculty member and students in a face-to-face classroom experience (Mayhew, 18), and providing access to adequate library resources (Goldstein, 13).

Telecommunications represents a new era in higher education, both in terms of the technology involved and in terms of the audience it serves. What then will constitute "quality instruction"? Here are a few ideas drawn from the literature on instructional technology and on adult education, areas that reflect by-and-large the major new audience reached by telecommunications learning.

Telecommunications Delivery

Since the advent of more advanced "media" for the classroom than the overhead projector and VCR, there has been a debate as to what is more or most effective technologically. In 1990 Stubbs and Burnham proposed a model Electronic Distance Education System that included the instructor, content, and learner connected by Methods and Techniques (Stubbs and Burnham, 27). Inherent in the Methods and Techniques were Devices that 'enabled' the instruction to be transmitted over distances.



(Stubbs and Burnham, 26-27)

Following a literature review and using personal experience, Stubbs and Burnham identified five considerations or qualities that seemed important: Time and Place Independence, Realism, Communication Paths, Ease of Use, and Immediacy. Based on a survey of knowledgeable individuals, a priority order was developed:

1. Communication Paths, i.e., how is communication done
2. Ease of Use
3. Realism, i.e., like broadcast TV or stilted, for instance
4. Time and Place Independence, i.e., specific locations or ?
5. Speed, i.e., instantaneous or some delay factor (Stubbs and Burnham, 32).

Using this priority listing, called the Potential Effectiveness Inventory, one can then evaluate any equipment available for a given distance learning situation. (This excludes cost, which was not included specifically in the referenced study (34), although cost has a direct impact on all of the criteria that rose to the surface.)

Adult Audience Needs

Now let us add in the aspect of the audience toward which this use of technological delivery is aimed. There is much research on the changing demographics of higher education clientele groups. The growing group presently is part-time adult students, who may be either seeking to achieve their first degree or may be attempting to retrain themselves for future employability (Goldstein, 14). This is the main audience for which telecommunications delivery is providing heretofore unachievable access to educational services. Assuming this audience, then, how can we provide a successful, quality learning experience using technology?

The theory base of what constitutes a quality adult education learning experience is long and well accepted. It begins with Malcolm Knowles, Professor Emeritus at North Carolina State University, who in 1970 identified the differences between traditional students and the adult student. Summarized, these were movement toward self-directed status, a desire to relate to and include their previous experiences in learning, the need to tie learning to a life situation that needs answering, and the importance of an increased life competency as the result of the learning (Knowles, 39).

These assumptions led to identification of ideal conditions for adult learning:

- the need to learn for self-actualization;
- the importance of conducive physical conditions, mutual trust, and freedom of expression;
- mutuality of goals between student and teacher;
- active participation in the planning and learning processes;
- use of experience in the classroom; and
- achievement of learner and faculty goals (Knowles, 52-53).

Jerold Apps (Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison) in 1992 offered additional criteria, some of which build on Knowles' ideas and some of which reflect cutting-edge ideas about what is 'good education' today. Briefly summarized, the additional criteria include:

- the issue of accountability (will I get my money's worth?)
- will the teacher use varied, stimulating methods and approaches to recognize individual learning styles?
- will the teacher be up-to-date?
- will the teacher relate theory to practice?
- will the course be accessible?
- will the administrative requirements be simple and minimal?
- how will the course be evaluated—tests or other forms of authentic assessment? (Apps, 4).

These two authors provide an interesting array of criteria to be met that move far beyond the traditional array with which we began.

In 1990 the National Science Teachers Association adopted "Criteria for Applying Distance Learning to Science Education." This document identifies specific criteria that any science learning via distance methods should satisfy:

- interaction between instructor and learners;
- flexibility of instructional design to allow for alterations ;
- manipulative experiences at distant site as well as home site ;
- competent faculty members;
- variety of other appropriate resources to support distance learning content;
- appropriate technology for the learning goal;
- evaluation of both program and students continuously to guide improvement of instruction (Harkness, 4).

The next challenge is to mesh these two sets of academic criteria with the evaluation criteria of telecommunications.

Proposed Comparison

Combining these three modern sources of criteria creates an interesting picture to use when evaluating distance education in all its many facets (see Chart I). Adding the traditional criteria highlights the development of additional quality factors that must be considered.

- **Communication Paths** seem to be the most important factor in both adult education and science learning experiences, since the requirement for communication between faculty and students, the dialog that would include sharing of life experiences and the need to use various strategies of instruction, receive/provide feedback, and make amendments to the instructional plan all would be affected by what is or is not available technologically.

- **Ease of Use** is tied to the physical comfort of the classroom for adults, since technology terrifies most of them. Ease of use also has an impact on what is used and its opposite number, difficulty of use, may deter use of a piece of equipment that is better suited for the task at hand. The NSTA requirement for appropriate technology would possibly have an impact here.

- **Realism** is also beneficial, particularly for the visual learner who does not process well in the verbal mode. Being able to see exactly what is happening at any given moment is beneficial to all learners, since recent brain research has reinforced the tendency of the brain to input data visually first, regardless of learning style.

- **Time and Place Independent** relates to access to learning experiences, and is particularly important to adults, who cannot leave their jobs and families to receive educational advancement if that opportunity is not nearby. Thus, technologies that facilitate access away from the campus broadcast site are responding to an important need of the adult student.

- **Speed** (of transmission) has not shown up in the research as a major factor and indeed neither the adult education criteria nor the NSTA criteria address this factor. Based on an understanding of learning styles, a less-than-real time video transmission speed may have an impact on some visual learners. However, my experience is that after a few minutes the viewer becomes accustomed to the speed of delivery and it does not provide a major negative in the success of the video portion. Conversely, providing a separate feed-back loop via mail, telephone, etc., may be too slow to generate the spontaneity necessary for effective dialog on a given issue. In that case adult students would be frustrated by the delay.

There were other needs that the telecommunications Potential Effectiveness Inventory did not address and those are shown under Other in Chart I. These issues would still need to be addressed by institutions in their continuing quest to excel. While it is possible that these issues may be showcased by a given telecommunications class, telecommunications does not either eliminate or add to these areas.

South Dakota State University's Approach

For the last three years this university has been delivering both undergraduate and graduate courses via two-way (audio-visual) interactive telecommunications. This configuration was chosen for its educational effectiveness despite increased cost factors. Support personnel provide the technical operation so that faculty members can concentrate on instruction. The classrooms at all sites are designed similarly and any site can serve as a broadcast site. Sites

also provide support services for students and faculty, including library access through the PALS network and a facsimile order/24-hour turn-around shipping service.

Faculty are requested to participate in a day-long training program that includes technical details like clothing that televises more effectively and types of overheads to use, and adult education theory and audience characteristics. Students are instructed in the use of the system at the beginning of the first session of each course.

The Graduate Council requires that graduate classes be two-way interactive and that all classes scheduled for telecommunications delivery be approved in advance by the council through submission of syllabi and dialog at the council meeting.

A support group of faculty implementing holistic learning in their classrooms meets several times a semester to share techniques they have used effectively. Several members of the group are telecommunications teachers who have used these techniques successfully on their tele-link classes.

Appendix: Chart I. Interrelationships of Quality Factors for Telecommunications Learning

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***Barbara Audley** is Director of Lifelong Learning and Outreach and Assistant Professor of Education at South Dakota State University*

***C. P. Sword** is Graduate Dean and Director of Research at South Dakota State University*

CHART 1
Interrelationships of Quality Factors For Telecommunications Learning

Traditional Factors	Potential Effectiveness Inventory	Adult Education Criteria	National Science Teachers Association Criteria
Contact Time	Communication Paths	Facilitate freedom of expression; permits 2-way dialog; active participation in class; sharing of experience; facilitate diverse teaching strategies; student input; achieve learner and faculty goals	Interaction between instructor and learners; facilitate dialog to encourage flexibility and student input
	Ease of Use	Has impact on physical conditions of class	Appropriate technology for learning involved
	Realism	Permits visual images to accompany verbal content	
	Time & Place Independence	Permits access when need develops	
	Speed	May have impact on real-time perception; want feedback/dialog immediately	
Faculty Competence		Teacher currency	Competent Faculty
			Manipulative experiences at distance; other resources available
Other		Mutuality of student/faculty goals; accountability; diverse teacher strategies; theory-to-practice approach	
		Evaluation	Evaluation

Connections for Community Education Through Access Cable Television

Paul E. Shumaker

In 1989, Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) seized upon an opportunity. Cable television had come to the City of Cleveland, and the College secured an educational access channel on the cable system.

Background

The emergence of Community Access Television in Cleveland was a direct result of the franchise agreement between North Coast Cable, Limited, the cable television provider, and the City of Cleveland. The agreement provided for five Community Access channels that would come under the control of a non-profit corporation. That corporation, which eventually was incorporated as the Cleveland Community Access Corporation (CCAC), was initially comprised of seven incorporators appointed by Cleveland's Mayor and City Council in the spring of 1988. One of those seven was the President of Cuyahoga Community College, who subsequently became the first president of the CCAC Board of Trustees. Of the five channels under CCAC jurisdiction, three were designated for educational programming (Channel 50–elementary and secondary education; Channel 51–community college, employment and training, and community service; and Channel 52–college and university), and two for public group and individual access (Channels 53 and 54).

Tri-C was closely associated with Access Television from the beginning, and contributed significant technical, administrative, and staff support to the CCAC, including reassignment of one of its administrators on a part-time basis to serve as the Executive Director of the CCAC. We moved to address two big questions: Who do we want to reach (audience), and what do we want to reach them with (programming)?

The Audience

Tri-C is comprised of three campuses roughly positioned in a triangle, each leg of which is approximately ten miles long. Driving time between campuses is approximately half an hour. Each campus is located in the service area of a different cable company. The College's Metropolitan Campus is located within the City of Cleveland, which is served by North Coast Cable, Limited. Presently, cable service is available in approximately 75,000 homes in the City. People in those residences are most likely to attend Tri-C at its Metropolitan or Eastern Campuses. These residents are our primary, and largest, target audience for cable programming.

Although it is most likely for us to think of individuals in their homes as the primary target audience for cable programming, a cable system may be capable of reaching other audiences and locations. In Cleveland, there are community centers, schools, institutions, and businesses that either have, or could have, cable access. The audience in these locations, which may or may not be the same as that found in the home, provides an opportunity for even more precise program targeting, and is one that we have yet to fully explore and investigate.

A third level of audience for consideration is those with whom there may be direct interactivity over any "institutional" or "B-Loop" cable services. At this level, there may be possibilities for both video and data exchange. This becomes an even narrower and more specialized audience and involves lesser known capabilities of a cable system. Depending upon how the system is built, there may be some real opportunities for program linkage and sharing. We are presently discussing the use of this "loop" with Cleveland State University.

The Programs

Having been involved in some of the initial planning for cable television in Cleveland, Tri-C had the advantage of prior thinking about what Community Access Television might mean, and how it might utilize the opportunity. Both then and now, we have viewed Community Access Television as a vehicle for reaching out into the community with credit instruction, employment training and information, community service programming, and college-related information and programs.

Tri-C began cablecasting on Channel 51 in September 1989, with approximately 100 hours of cablecasting per week. Our first program schedule was comprised primarily of pre-recorded programming, focusing on telecourses. Another staple was, and continues to be, the Cleveland City Club Forum and the Mayor's Educational Forum, which take place in community locations. The College tapes and edits both programs weekly, and provides them to area cablecasters and the local PBS Affiliate for airing. To that program base have been added the Kentucky GED series and selected satellite-fed programs of general interest. Occasionally, pre-recorded "specials," including the College's Commencement, have been cablecast.

Our first live program was the 1989 Fall Convocation, which took place about a week after we first began cablecasting. It featured several College and guest speakers, faculty award

ceremonies, and interviews with College administrators. Regular live programming began with "Conversations," a weekly program focusing on College activities, events, or notable programs.

This was followed by "Work Spirit," which centered on topics relevant to the workplace. The next live series, "Career Moves," examined opportunities in careers for which Tri-C provides education and training. The College also regularly cablecasts College basketball and other sporting events, thus contributing to growing support for the athletic program.

The College also occasionally presents other special programs via television, including teleconferences downlinked from satellite, in-studio programs, and programs produced primarily for telecast by satellite to national audiences.

In the fall of 1992, the College began a new venture as it cablecast its first, live, credit course, "College Survival Skills." Students can attend the class in-person on campus, or at home. Those attending at home are linked to their fellow students in the class by telephone and the televised class session.

At Tri-C, we use a mix of pre-recorded and live programming that comes from both local and non-local sources. This was our intent from the beginning. Outside of audience appeal and content relevance, there are several factors that contribute to this mix. For pre-recorded programs from other sources, these include, cost, availability, and technical quality. Pre-recorded programming may be obtained from many sources, often at little or no cost. From our satellite dishes, we find a wealth of programs available to be downlinked, recorded, and replayed on a delayed basis. (One such program source is the Community College Satellite Network that provides satellite-fed programs each month that colleges can record for delayed playback over cable. Tri-C serves as the uplink site for that monthly service.) For live programs coming from other sources, such as direct feed from satellite, the cost and availability of technical support also must be added.

This capability is added to our significant production facilities, staff, and equipment, to produce programming , and cablecast live or on a delayed basis. These local productions may be done for others on a fee-for-service basis. For the live or pre-recorded programs that we produce, the availability and cost of production crews, production and editing, equipment, and facilities have to be considered.

The final mix also will be heavily influenced by the available resource configuration. Using programming from external sources puts a heavier burden on support staff, while production done by your college (live or taped for delayed use) has a heavier impact on your production resources. The cable mix also must then be balanced against the mix of services required to support other instructional and institutional priorities. However, regardless of how resources and services are configured, the bottom line is still relevancy for your target audience.

The College continually seeks new programming ideas, both pre-recorded and those that it can produce itself. As new programming is found, room is made in the schedule by reducing program repeats.

The Value of Access Television

The primary value of Tri-C's cablecasting efforts is the potential to have an impact on distance education initiatives. Delivery of education to distant learners has been a beneficial alternative for students whose family, personal, or work obligations prevent them from pursuing courses on campus. In delivering courses via cable, and other distance delivery methods, we closely monitor our efforts to ensure that the delivery system does not compromise the educational quality and value of the instruction. In that evaluative process, we rely heavily upon our faculty, who are intimately involved in every course in our distance education inventory.

A secondary value of cablecasting has been the opportunity to promote the College and its programs, introduce aspects of college life to the community, and establish a direct, positive relationship with our current and potential students. We are constantly conscious of the need to maintain technical and program quality representative of the College. Our access cable programming may be the only contact an individual has with us, or it may spark an individual's desire to begin or continue his/her education at Tri-C.

Reality

In reality, we also had to recognize, up front, that we were competing with every other channel on the cable spectrum. We did not try to promote ourselves as something we were not. We had to be uniquely Tri-C. Hence, our logo that identifies us as "Smart TV." We do not try to appeal to the masses. Instead, we aim our programs to that group that sees education as "the educational piece of the puzzle" of their lives, or who has an interest in Tri-C.

Expenses? - You Bet!

Keeping a TV channel, even an "access" channel, going is expensive. Simply keeping the channel on the air for 100 hours per week, 52 weeks per year, requires a considerable investment in technical staffing. In addition, there is the cost of the equipment and its maintenance, repair, and eventual replacement. Finally, on top of that, there is the cost of programming. Program schedules have to be developed, printed, and distributed; staff have to be hired, evaluated, trained, and given direction; logs have to be kept; and phones and mail answered. New programming has to be obtained or developed. New graphics are required, or a new or modified "look" for the channel may be needed. In short, someone has to be in charge to either do it or make sure it all gets done. Supporting a full schedule of quality television programming is not an "add-on" to a staff member's already-over-committed time, but a primary responsibility that must be assumed by a qualified person.

The cost of programming will vary, but it can be significant. Generally, the larger the percentage of programming you produce yourself, the higher the cost for a good stock of pre-recorded programs, production facilities, equipment, and staff.

For pre-recorded programs, there is the assessment of how many of them are suitable for television (format, content, relevance, currency) and how long a series they will support, even

with reruns. With live or locally produced programs, for each hour spent on cable production is an hour that cannot be spent on other productions (unless the production will serve multiple purposes). Total production capacity (both current and projected) must be measured against current and future needs for cable and other types of production. Those entering the cable access arena must be prepared to make some choices!

Income? - Don't Count on a Lot

There is not much expectation of revenue from Access Television efforts. Advertising cannot be accepted and efforts to raise significant income by doing production on a contract basis for external groups will eat into the time to meet your own needs. The bottom line is that there must be institutional commitment (both in fiscal resources and philosophy) in order to be successful. As of the first of the year, the channel programmed by Tri-C is the only one of the five Access Channels being programmed on a regular basis. Funding for Access Television was not provided in the initial franchise agreement between North Coast Cable Limited and the City of Cleveland. Recently CCAC has been able to negotiate funding support and provide added support to the College commitment of fiscal resources and philosophical support and belief in Access Television as an integral part of our distance education effort.

The Future

As we look down the road a bit, some things appear quite certain, others less so. With certainty, our emphasis will be on instruction, and we will continue to build our offering of live credit instruction. We also will continue to produce live sports and occasional "specials." We will continually search for new community interest programming, either locally-produced or provided by producers from around the nation. Although we would prefer to have programming as locally relevant as possible, our mix of live and locally produced programming vs. that produced by others will be greatly influenced by the resources we have to invest in the locally produced programming. We will look to ways to reduce the cost of providing programs for Access Television, but not to the point of compromising program, relevancy, or technical standards.

With funding secured, CCAC is making plans to activate its other channels within the next several months. Tri-C is being considered by the CCAC as the manager and operator of the total Access Distribution system, which will play back programming over all access channels. This service would be provided under contract between Tri-C and the CCAC, with service emanating from Tri-C's Master Control facilities in downtown Cleveland.

The College's experience with Access Television has been very positive. We do not yet feel we have explored the full potential of this medium, but will continue to seek out opportunities to use this medium to take our College to the people.

***Paul E. Shumaker** is Provost (Acting) and Vice President, Telecommunications, of Cuyahoga Community College-Eastern Campus, Cleveland, OH*

Reaching Students Through Distance Education

Lynn Blakesley
Steve Zahn

Waubonsee Community College is a two-year, public, postsecondary institution located in Sugar Grove, Illinois, about 50 miles west of Chicago. The College also operates a campus in downtown Aurora, a city with a population of 99,581. Waubonsee's district covers 600 square miles, of which the largest area is rural. Some of the residents of this area must drive 30 miles to the main campus located in Sugar Grove, or 41 miles to the campus located in Aurora. In an effort to provide access to courses and to better serve the students who have difficulty attending traditional classes on campus, Waubonsee has investigated several methods of utilizing technology to deliver instruction. Telecourses, audiocourses, and live instruction via microwave are among the methods used to provide alternative access to academic programs.

Telecourses are complete instructional systems that include videotapes, a textbook, and a study guide. As with any other college credit course, an instructor is assigned to each telecourse. Students proceed in a telecourse independently by following the study guide, reading the textbook materials, and viewing the corresponding videotapes. The videotapes may be checked out from the Waubonsee Learning Resources Center, local public libraries, and some video stores. Students can also view Waubonsee telecourses on local cable channels. Audiocourses are managed in the same manner as telecourses, except that the majority of the content is delivered via audiotape.

Waubonsee employs many telecommunications technologies to deliver instruction throughout the district. The College operates a four-channel ITFS system. ITFS stands for Instructional Television Fixed Service, which provides a one-way video/audio transmission from the Sugar Grove campus. The College uses ITFS transmission to provide Federal Emergency Management Agency teleconferences to the Aurora Department of Emergency Services. Two ITFS channels are used to transmit taped telecourse programming to local cable companies for distribution to subscriber homes in the College's district. Instructional programming via cable television will be enhanced with the addition of a cable television access studio to be located at the Waubonsee Aurora campus.

Waubonsee recently completed the installation of a low-power UHF station, Channel 54. Initially the College will use Channel 54 to provide a bulletin board service highlighting Waubonsee events and to televise special events programming. Future plans include using Channel 54 as a medium for the delivery of instruction and training to businesses and homes. Waubonsee has also utilized satellite delivery to provide instruction in the field of interpreter training. Four national teleconferences have been produced and uplinked from the Sugar Grove campus. The most recent teleconference was also broadcast over Channel 54.

Perhaps the most unique application of telecommunications technology in use at Waubonsee is the live instruction delivered over the College's microwave system, known as TIC. TIC stands for Telecommunications Instructional Consortium. The present system links the main Sugar Grove college campus with the downtown Aurora campus and with Kaneland High School, Oswego High School, Plano High School, Waubonsie Valley High School, and the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. The members of the consortium began sharing courses over the TIC system in the Fall of 1988.

All instruction is delivered live using the two-way, interactive microwave system. The microwave system is a specially licensed communications medium that allows for closed circuit transmission of audio and video signals. Each distance learning classroom within the network is linked to Waubonsee Community College through a microwave path. As each path is routed from the member school, a star configuration of communications links is formed. This allows for the coordination of classrooms at selected locations to meet the needs of any teaching requirement. The instructor can see and hear the students at all of the sites. The students are also able to see and hear one another, as well as their instructor.

Several microwave channels can be added to an established microwave path creating two or more distance learning classrooms at a single location. Waubonsee has two independent microwave channels over a single path between the Sugar Grove and Aurora campuses. There are two distance learning classrooms at each campus, for a total of four Waubonsee classrooms. In the evening the College utilizes the distance learning classrooms located at the member high schools as extension sites for college credit courses.

The heart of Waubonsee's TIC system is an instructor-initiated router control system. This system gives the instructor full control over the technical functions that send and receive images from the respective distance learning locations. At the beginning of each class period, the instructor selects the sites that will receive the instruction. This faculty selected configuration is electronically established and maintained at Waubonsee's central switching facility. Throughout the class period, the instructor selects the video that is seen by students at the origination and remote locations. Instructors can select a view of their origination classroom, a view of materials on their podium, or their image to share with students at the remote locations. At the end of the class period, the classroom configuration is electronically cleared and made ready for the next class. Waubonsee's technical center allows for several independent teaching situations to occur simultaneously. Thus, several classes can be offered from various locations within the network at any time.

Waubonsee Community College has made a significant investment in the network to ensure reliable operation. Every effort is made to keep the technology of the teaching environment as invisible as possible. Minimizing the instructor's operation of the network to simple

keystrokes on a control panel greatly reduces the feeling that the distance learning system is a complicated operation requiring extensive training. Instructors quickly forget that they are communicating with students many miles apart and realize that interaction with others is as easy as conversation.

Faculty interested in teaching on the TIC system participate in a three-day workshop offered by the College every August. During the workshop faculty learn to operate the equipment in the distance learning classroom. However, the majority of the workshop time is spent concentrating on techniques that allow for maximum interaction with the students at the distant sites. Workshop participants practice teaching to each other, which gives them the experience of being a distant site student. It is this experience that best prepares them for the challenges of teaching over a distance learning system. Participation in faculty training is voluntary, as is teaching on the TIC system; however, a stipend is paid for the time spent during the workshop. Eighty-nine instructors have participated in the summer workshops. Of that number, 46 have gone on to teach on the TIC system.

Each semester the College averages 30 college-credit courses on the TIC system. Course offerings include speech, child development, psychology, accounting, criminal justice, history, health, Spanish, and English as a Second Language. To date 6,000 college students have participated in this system. In 1991 consultants from the Instructional Technology Department at Northern Illinois University conducted a study to determine the instructional effectiveness of the TIC system. The success of the TIC students exceeded the expectations of the researchers. Students taking courses via TIC did as well as the students in the traditional section of the same course.

At the same time the TIC system is being used for college-credit courses, the high school members of the consortium participate in accelerated high school instruction. Four hundred and fifty high school students have taken courses in German, French, calculus, advanced placement English, advanced geometry, and topics in modern physics.

Illinois is actively involved in the development of a statewide telecommunications network that will facilitate distance education opportunities for all sectors of education. Waubonsee Community College played a key role in developing the statewide plan and the TIC system serves as the model upon which the statewide network will be built. The first phase of the statewide network is currently under development. In the Fall of 1993 Waubonsee Community College will begin sharing college credit courses with Elgin Community College and McHenry County College.

Waubonsee Community College has been a leader in providing students with access to courses through a variety of alternative delivery systems. Through the use of various instructional technologies, Waubonsee continues to expand and enhance the quality of programs that are available to students.

Lynn Blakesley *is Dean of Learning Resources and Instructional Technology at Waubonsee Community College, Sugar Grove, IL*

Steve Zahn *is Telecommunications System Technical Manager at Waubonsee Community College, Sugar Grove, IL*

Managing Contractually Offered Programs Effectively: An Important Market Opportunity

Douglas W. Steeples
Michael R. Sawdey

American higher education has from its inception evolved through a complex interplay between traditional, conserving aims, the practical concerns of a new and frequently anti-intellectual society, and a changing socio-economic context that constantly imposed novel demands. One result, today, is an array of institutions of higher learning of unrivalled complexity, diversity, and quality, with enrollments now exceeding 13 million. But even this diversity and scope may not meet the need of the new economic reality, in which knowledge or information, joins raw materials, energy, and machines as a driving force.

In the new economy, the knowledge of a nation's labor force, as Robert Reich frequently argues, will become a crucial variable. In the United States we can already see what is coming, in growing expectations for lifelong continuing professional and job-related education. Thus, a seeming paradox: a recent federal study found, "The more schooling workers have, the more likely they will work in jobs that require training, and the more likely their school work qualified them for their jobs" (Amirault, 1992, p.33).

This paradox contains opportunities for higher education to provide new elements of service. Formal schooling already provides training through which 33 percent of the labor force qualified for its job, but in addition 43 percent added to their training through focused coursework, between 1983 and 1991. Millions of individuals each year need added education, which they secure through sources outside of higher education. In many instances, this instruction merits formal academic credit, but it would sorely strain colleges and universities to create units offering such credit. Here lies the possibility for alliances, affiliations, contractual relationships through which to bring together entities offering instruction and institutions that can, with proper cautions, award credit.

Accreditation-Related Issues

Any college or university that is considering affiliation with third parties through which to deliver specialized instruction, either on campus or off, would do well to proceed with care. In one way or another all four of the North Central Association's Criteria for Accreditation come into play as a contractual relationship with a specialized instructional provider is contemplated. First, is the proposed affiliation consistent with the institution's publicly stated purposes, and in turn with its mission, which must be appropriate for a college or university? Second, will there be an adequate commitment of resources to the venture, to enable it to succeed? The most difficult potential problems lie in this realm, as will be noted below. Third, is there sufficient provision for determining whether the venture is succeeding—that is, for quality control? Last, does the venture promise to add to, or subtract from, ability to continue to accomplish institutional purposes?

- **Mission.** Certain kinds of missions may well preclude affiliations with third-party providers of instruction, provision of occupationally related or applied instruction, or off-campus activity. An institution that is entirely residential in character, serves a purely liberal arts mission, instructs exclusively traditional-aged students, or emphasizes theory to the exclusion of practice and avoids anything resembling post-baccalaureate or continuing education should find little reason to pursue contractual relationships with third parties specializing in career-related fields ranging from accounting through communication, criminal justice, teacher education, and banking to many areas of government work, health care, real estate and insurance, and business management, among others.

- **Organization of Resources.** Adequate support is essential to the success of any venture. There must be appropriate administrative structures, well-defined and suitable roles and relationships among administration and faculty, provision of qualified personnel to perform key functions, and, of course, the financial and physical underpinnings required for success. Above all, there must be effective institutional control of all instruction, from whatever source. Much can go wrong, and will, absent effective control.

  The issue of control is critical, and freighted with questions. How can one control a third party who develops and delivers instruction? This includes controlling curriculum, maintaining calibre of instruction, assuring adherence to institutional academic and relevant fiscal policies, regulations, and practices. How can the interests and rights of students be protected? Student services—advising, registration, financial aid, placement, maintenance of accurate records, provision for timely and accurate billing and refunding, prompt issuance of transcripts—must be offered, even though instruction occurs at multiple off-campus sites, not to mention library and other learning resources. These are only the most obvious of a list of questions that become more difficult as the number of instructional sites increases.

- **Accomplishment of Purpose.** If the problems mentioned above seem daunting, then those of quality control become positively formidable. By what means can an institution assess the success of instruction offered externally by third-party contractors who play a major role in recruiting prospective instructors, as well as in

developing curricular ideas? Or is the task so inherently difficult that it is impossible to accomplish in any meaningful sense? How can one frame and implement a sound system to review programs, monitor instructor performance, and assess student accomplishment where academic affiliates actually deliver the instruction?

- **Continued Accomplishment of Purpose.** Given the foregoing, is it possible to frame and operate programs, through affiliation with contractual partners, in a manner that adds to the long-term viability of the sheltering institution?

The Experience of Aurora University

Aurora University offers a model for the successful conduct of contractual partnerships. Celebrating its centennial in 1992-1993, Aurora instructs some 1700 students at its campus, some forty-five miles west of downtown Chicago, and another 400 at three satellite sites. Aurora is a small urban university, despite its deceptive situation in a tree-lined residential neighborhood: only 20 percent of its students are traditional-aged, full-time, residential undergraduates. Another 20 percent are traditional-aged, full-time undergraduate commuting students. The remainder are adults, and commute, studying part-time. More than 30 percent are enrolled in a half dozen professional master's degree programs. More than 22 percent are minority students. Since the 1940's Aurora has been deeply involved in adult education, through evening and weekend instruction and various special programs.

Given this background, it may come as no surprise to learn that in 1992 Aurora University also offered instruction, through contractual relationships with several partners, to more than 7,000 adult, part-time graduate students at sites in the southeastern third of Wisconsin, the northern half of Illinois, and the Quad Cities of Iowa. Of these students, about 380 are pursuing an M.A.T. at a site in New Berlin, Wisconsin. The remainder are upgrading their professional credentials, mostly in teacher education. It is through meeting the needs of this diverse off-campus graduate population that Aurora has developed model partnerships. Its efforts have addressed the Criteria for Accreditation squarely.

- **Mission.** The university adopted a new mission statement as the first step in a strategic planning effort, in spring, 1992. This statement clearly defines its mission as an urban institution serving a diverse population of undergraduate and graduate learners in a variety of settings. Career education receives prominent notice, as the goal of a university that aims to prepare "liberally educated professionals," who are purposeful, proficient, and ethical.

- **Organization of Resources.** Four organizational steps were of fundamental importance. The first was the creation of an administrative structure and offices to manage the program. New College began operation in August 1991, after a period of planning, involving the entire university central administration and approval by the institutional governing board. Directed by a jurisdictional dean, it has its own directors, site managers, faculty, and support staff, all adequately officed and equipped. These persons perform essential supervisorial functions, review curriculum, approve course syllabi, oversee the selection of part-time faculty, and engage in a range of other control and entrepreneurial activities.

The second step was to articulate appropriate academic regulations and procedures, within the context of university regulations and procedures, for the operation of the college. Some of these involved merely the extension to New College of university standards developed through a process that resulted in a new *Faculty Handbook* in autumn 1992. This included program reviews, assessment of faculty performance, evaluation of student learning, how curricular change could be effected, and the like. Other regulations, governing such matters as advertising, creation of a separate catalog of course offerings, creation of a management information base and auxiliary elements of the student record system, and so on, were new and were specific to the academic control issues raised by working with contractual partners.

The third step was commitment of sufficient material support to enable New College to operate effectively. New College is not inexpensive: its first-year direct costs were over $300,000 and will grow rapidly as the range of activities extends. Some parts of the cost structure (travel, data communication, computing and programing resources, printing, and shipping, for example) differ markedly from a traditional academic program, and judicious but flexible budgeting is essential.

The fourth step was crucial, for it was the means by which the university attained control of the programs that New College offers through affiliation with contractual academic partners that are external entities. Extended research and legal review resulted in creation of documents that set out clear contractual expectations governing the relationship with and the activities of contractual partners: how courses may be proposed and added to the curriculum; standards for faculty; the enforcement of university academic and other relevant regulations; refund and grading policies; the financial details of the relationship; monitoring of faculty and student performance; and much more. Defined in substantial detail, these expectations constitute through their incorporation into the contracts of affiliation the means by which Aurora University exercises full and effective control. They are the heart of New College's operation insofar as work with contractual academic partners is concerned. The dean of New College is directly accountable to the chief academic officer of the university for ensuring that the College and its programs are properly operated.

- **The Future.** New College meets its own expenses and adds materially to the educational and fiscal strength of the university. It also figures centrally in the strategic planning for the university, and it has already taught the university the value of thinking afresh about ways to accomplish its mission. It has also taught that fresh thinking can bring important new understanding that extends to identification of opportunities, maintenance of high educational standards, and creation of novel systems of instruction and control. Already, the college is planning a nontraditional undergraduate degree completion program for introduction in a new service area. It is a key element in Aurora's description of itself as the urban university of the future, in Aurora's future, and quite possibly, as a model in the adaptation of higher education itself to the novel demands of an emerging new economic order.

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Douglas W. Steeples *is Vice President for Academic Affairs at Aurora University, Aurora, IL*

Michael R. Sawdey *is Dean, New College, at Aurora University, Aurora, IL*

Chapter VI

Using Assessment as the Bridge

Descriptive Approaches to Assessment: Moving Beyond Meeting Requirements to Making a Difference

Karl L. Schilling
Karen Maitland Schilling

Most of the work being done in higher education assessment has been evaluative in character, perhaps because the early calls for assessment came from government officials asking about accountability, and because there is a general American tendency to value comparative and competitive models. Evaluative assessment focuses on decisions about degrees of good or bad, effective or ineffective in relation to student or program performance. While such judgments may be useful for comparing institutions, they typically do not provide the kind of information that would allow for improvement within an institution, i.e., they tell you how you stand but not how or what got you to that position.

In the early stages of the assessment movement, commercially available, standardized tests provided comparative evaluations. However, faculty quickly became frustrated because of the inability to translate the results from these instruments into their own local context to improve the curriculum. Thus, many campuses tried to develop their own standardized tests tied more closely to their own curricular goals. However, faculty resistance to investing the substantial time needed to develop appropriate instruments, difficulty in achieving consensus on desired goals and outcomes, frustration with indexing ephemeral goals, and inevitable suspicions of "teaching to the test" have limited the number of institutions able to successfully undertake such approaches. Even then, this approach tends to generate a static evaluative portrait that reveals little about the operation of the curriculum as a dynamic system.

Much of the effort that has gone into assessment, thus far, has resulted in frustration that it has not really made a difference in the educational experiences of students on campus. The

evaluative efforts have provided summative information rather than formative, that is, faculty do not get much information that will actually help improve the quality of the curriculum or teaching on campus. In order for assessment to make a difference, it needs to start out with the goal of being formative in character rather than summative, i.e., it must be embedded in a framework of understanding and implementing organizational change. To date, a conceptual framework dealing with organizational character and change has been largely absent from discussions of student outcomes assessment.

Newly emerging efforts in higher education have borrowed from industry the ideas of continuous quality improvement. These efforts provide conceptual frameworks and techniques that will foster the use of assessment results to improve the undergraduate experience. W. Edwards Deming's (1990) ideas about "profound knowledge" provide helpful insights into organizations and change in a language that is readily accessible to the academic community. According to Deming, "profound knowledge" involves four interrelated parts: "1) appreciation for a system; 2) some knowledge of the theory of variation; 3) a theory of knowledge; and 4) psychology." These concepts underlie his 14 Points for Management, which have become virtual commandments for the Total Quality movement. For the purposes of this paper, Deming's ideas about understanding the nature of institutions as systems, the invisibility of systems to those involved in them, and the need to "drive out fear" in order to facilitate improvement in a system will provide foci for understanding the potential advantages of descriptive assessment over evaluative approaches.

Examined through Deming's framework, the curriculum can be understood as an "invisible system." Lists of courses are linked together, often by elaborate rhetoric, to create general education requirements, departmental majors, and degree requirements. With the use of our bureaucratic equivalents of "smoke and mirrors," the curricular system often seems visible. After all, "it" is recorded on transcripts and students complete "it." Yet, how many faculty know, beyond vague generalities, what their colleagues in their own departments actually teach, let alone those in other parts of the institution? How many professors know the goals, books, topics, assignments, and expectations of any courses beyond the ones that they themselves teach? Students "see" more of the curriculum than faculty, but they too are "blind" to the curriculum beyond their own course selections and direct classroom experiences. To change or improve an invisible system, one must first make it visible. Assessment may play a powerful role in making the curriculum visible, an important first step in seeking continuous improvement if a formative approach is taken.

The evaluative focus of much of the previous work in assessment engenders defensiveness, fear, and suspicion among even the most secure and effective faculty. As part of his "14 Points," Deming identifies the need to "drive out fear" to create optimal environments for continuous quality improvement. Even locally developed evaluative instruments have a high potential to create fear since they come from outside the instructor's classroom.

Descriptive, rather than evaluative, approaches to assessment introduce far less fear and suspicion. Comprehensive portfolios, intensive student interviews, focus groups, or student time-use studies make the curriculum visible by emphasizing its intersection with the lives of students.

Comprehensive portfolios, for example, are collections of the artifacts of the curriculum. Assessment activity in this descriptive mode is like archaeology or cultural anthropology. First, assessors acting as "field researchers" dig out "curricular artifacts" by recruiting students to keep all of the materials they produce for classes. These materials may be catalogued and described (e.g., research papers, multiple choice exams, personal essays, creative writing, short answer quizzes). Summaries may be developed based on the classification of materials (e.g., the number of pages of any particular kind of work, the percentage of the total work that this constitutes), and individual student narratives, which reflect the range and diversity of student experiences, may be compiled. Tentative hypotheses about the meaning of the materials may be generated and shared with other experts for their reflection and alternative hypotheses. "Raw" portfolios, along with the summaries and tentative hypotheses, are shared with the faculty involved in the curriculum. Finally, the information and hypotheses may be displayed publicly, allowing access to the possible meanings and interpretations as well as the raw material itself.

Two illustrations from Miami University provide greater insights into the utility of descriptive assessment. The first project involves the university's liberal education program, in which a random sample of 30 to 40 students from each entering class provides information on the nature of the liberal education program. Students keep comprehensive portfolios, engage in yearly interviews, participate in a time usage study (students are beeped on a random basis and asked to write very concretely in a log what they are doing at that time), and complete a free writing exercise that asks them to reflect on their experiences at the university in relation to a number of curricular and student development goals.

The descriptive materials from these students are shared with faculty campus-wide in periodic newsletters. In addition, the materials are used to develop a presentation for parents of students at Summer Orientation. This presentation focuses on the work entering students may be doing in the fall semester using excerpts from interviews and descriptions of the portfolios and time-usage studies from the previous entering class. The materials will be used to document differences between the old system of general education, a distributive cafeteria approach, and the new liberal education program that has a number of pedagogical principles and goals that inform course development.

The project has already begun to have an impact at Miami University. Faculty who have conducted intensive interviews with students report having gained considerable insight into how students experience courses: what they like and do not like about various instructional approaches, what is important about the classroom environment that facilitates or hinders their learning, the nature of assignments that allow them to learn best. This year, the impact of this work will become even more apparent as selected faculty engage in close readings of the portfolios in relation to the goals and principles of the new curriculum.

The second project involves the Western College Program, a residential, interdisciplinary liberal arts college within the University. Since 1989, all Western Program majors have kept a comprehensive portfolio of all materials that they produce for classes. These portfolios are used for advising purposes, particularly at two key points in the program—at the end of their sophomore year when students develop their individualized, upper-division program of study year and when they begin to write their senior projects. In addition, portfolios are

reviewed by Western faculty who meet in retreat to read the portfolios and identify assignments that relate to the college mission statement and various program goals. The task is not to evaluate how well "critical thinking" is being done, for example, but to identify assignments that clearly call for students to think critically. This review process has brought to light both the strengths of the curriculum and areas that needed strengthening. For the first time, we as a faculty "saw" our curriculum. We discovered that by engaging in discussions focused on actual student work, our discourse changed from "my" students to "our" students, a key shift in perspective demanded by Continuous Quality Improvement. The language change accompanied the recognition of the curriculum as a system and a sense of our collective impact and responsibility, that is, our individual courses were interconnected and had a synergism that could not be ignored.

This recognition fostered steps toward improvement of the curriculum. For example, for several years we were frustrated that our students had difficulty in the initial phases of development of their year-long senior project. As we read the portfolios, it became evident that nowhere in the curriculum were we teaching research paper writing. The students were doing lots of writing, but there was no evidence of any systematic instruction in the process of writing a research paper. We did not need a standardized test on the research skill levels of our students; we just needed to see the system for the solution to become apparent. As a result, the faculty made a commitment to ensure that research writing was taught at several points in the core curriculum.

The integration of descriptive approaches to assessment with Deming's ideas about profound knowledge holds great potential for moving assessment beyond evaluation and toward a model for a faculty-owned process that results in continuous improvement of the curriculum. By viewing assessment work as a task that emphasizes careful observation, systematic data collection, and review of hypotheses in relation to the tales of the "natives," we can expose the underlying system, making it visible so that improvements can be made. Descriptive assessment clearly addresses Deming's idea of the importance of making systems visible as the basis for establishing a culture that provides for continuous institutional improvement. If we want assessment to make a difference, we must start by trying systematically to describe the system in which we are involved before we try to change it.

Reference

Deming, W. Edwards. 1990. A system of profound knowledge. Handout from March 10, 1990, workshop.

***Karl L. Schilling** is Director, AAHE Assessment Forum, Washington, DC, and Associate Dean at Miami University, Oxford, OH*

***Karen Maitland Schilling** is University Director of Liberal Education at Miami University, Oxford, OH*

The Baldrige Award: Can it be Made to Fit Higher Education?

Dean L. Hubbard
Darrell W. Krueger

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award is structured around seven "Categories" considered essential for total quality management: 1) Leadership, 2) Information and Analysis, 3) Strategic Quality Planning, 4) Human Resource Development and Management, 5) Management of Process Quality, 6) Quality and Operational Results, and 7) Customer Focus and Satisfaction. Subsumed under the seven categories are 28 "Examination Items" that focus on some dimension of the category being considered. In similar fashion, the 28 Examination Items are further clarified by 92 "Areas to Address." Pages two-four of the *1993 Guidelines* list ten "core values and concepts" that "together...represent the underlying basis for integrating the overall customer and company operational performance requirements." Although not all of these mesh easily with the culture of higher education, the Criteria were designed to be generic and non-prescriptive. Generic in the sense that, although the terminology used reflects the argot of business, the concepts apply equally to any large group attempting to accomplish a common task. The various categories do not define quality nor prescribe management strategies; rather, they force one to ask certain questions, a feature that makes the model unusually provocative.

Can the Baldrige Award be Applied to Higher Education?

Certainly the concepts and principles incorporated into the Baldrige Criteria are not incompatible with ideals espoused by educators, even if they might not fit current practices or be couched in the jargon of academe. Nonetheless, even a cursory reading of the Criteria and Areas to Address reveals that they were not crafted with educational institutions in mind. While the objectives undergirding what is asked for may be generic, considerable time must be spent extrapolating from industry (where expressions such as "process simplification" and "waste reduction" are common) to higher education if the average faculty member is to be convinced that this is something that will really result in improved quality, particularly in the academic side of the enterprise.

Perhaps the potential role of the Baldrige Criteria in university planning is best illustrated by considering the approach being refined at Northwest Missouri State University and Winona State University.

Northwest Missouri State University

In 1986 Northwest Missouri State University adopted its first strategic quality plan built around principles that have since come be labeled "Total Quality Management," or, simply, "TQM."[1] Northwest's plan, called "The Culture of Quality," contains 42 goals and 40 action steps it was anticipated would take seven years to fully implement. Although each year the plan was updated and revised as part of the implementation process, in fact, few substantial alterations were made in the original document.

By fall 1992, it was clear that, unless the institution was going to stagnate, some planning model would have to be adopted since nearly all of the action steps in the original plan had been completed or were nearing completion. Furthermore, although considerable controversy attended the launching of the plan in 1986, by 1992 there was broad agreement across campus with the principles undergirding the Culture of Quality and general enthusiasm for the positive changes that had taken place within the University as a result of the plan.

Several planning approaches were reviewed in an attempt to locate a heuristic model that would force campus planners to address a more comprehensive set of questions and push the University to the next level of quality improvement. After field testing and extensive discussion, it was decided that the University would definitely be improved through the application of the Baldrige Criteria. Even those faculty who originally viewed the criteria and terminology as too business oriented were near passionate in their conclusion regarding the value of the Criteria for university planning. Further, while changing the words "customer" to "student" and "company" to "university" were seen as helpful for analyzing some systems or programs, the group concluded that permanent wording changes are not necessary and would probably obscure or limit the applicability of the Criteria. The only caveat sounded was that since the Criteria are so demanding and so comprehensive, a limited number of systems and programs should be targeted at any one time for analysis using this approach.

Ultimately, three systems and five programs were selected for application. Advising (treated as a system), starting with the first contact admissions counselors have with a student, moving on to include freshmen orientation, the role of the faculty advisor, professional counseling services, and ending with the ultimate placement of graduates. The second system chosen was instruction, with the faculty member as customer. Again, starting with the recruitment and hiring of new faculty, support during the first two or three years of teaching, evaluation for promotion and tenure, and faculty development. The third system selected was residence hall life, including physical facilities, activities programming, hall governance, and discipline.

In addition to general education (the University's main product), each college was asked to select at least one program for refinement. Although implementation of the model is still in process, enthusiasm among all participants is high and acceptance of the approach seems near universal.

Winona State University

Winona State University helped pioneer in Minnesota the assessment of the compatibility of—or adaptability of—Baldrige Award Criteria to education in general and higher education in specific. Because of its quality enhancement initiatives built upon The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education, the University was selected as one of 14 educational entities to participate in a "Partners for Quality" program developed by the Minnesota Council for Quality and Minnesota Academic Excellence Foundation. Under this program, four primarily undergraduate institutions, three technical colleges, one community college, and six public school districts participated in a Baldrige Criteria self-assessment, aided in each case by a business/industrial partner thoroughly familiar with the Baldrige program and process.

Winona State, assisted by its business partner IBM-Rochester Division (a 1990 Baldrige Award winner), performed its self-assessment in the categories of Information and Analysis, and Customer Satisfaction. As a result, it was concluded that the Baldrige Criteria are, in fact, compatible with and useful to education, although they best fit the support or service units of education.

The University currently has moved beyond the "pilot" phase, instituting development of a series of "indicators" that will guide the quality journey in the teaching/learning arena. Measurements of these indicators will provide the institution with baseline data. Determination of "world class" benchmarks then will be made, a process that will be aided considerably when educational processes are more clearly defined and standardized quality indicators are identified. To aid that effort, Winona Sate in October joined with the American Association for Higher Education and the Johnson Foundation to sponsor a conference at the Foundation's Wingspread Center in Racine, Wisconsin. Convinced that a marriage between continuous quality improvement concepts and The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education would produce a family of students prepared to return the nation to global pre-eminence in the 21st century, national leaders in education and business gathered to promote such a courtship. The 46 conference participants represented 15 institutions and three systems of higher education, five educational organizations, two high schools, and six businesses known for leadership in the total quality area. The sessions focused on developing an effective architecture to support continuous quality improvement in education, including identification of key educational processes and determination of activities that will: 1) move the process forward, and 2) overcome present-day inhibitors to continuous improvement in education.

Conclusion

Probably no college or university in the U.S. would qualify for a Baldrige Award if the process were opened up to include education today. On the other hand, all institutions would benefit greatly from trying. The Baldrige Criteria applied to education are straightforward, challenging and compelling. Any institution with an administration and faculty willing to put forth the effort and make the changes suggested by the Criteria will be invigorated by the

process. Those so inclined can receive a free copy of the 1993 application guidelines by writing:

The Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award
United States Department of Commerce
National Institute of Standards and Technology
Route 270 and Quince Orchard Road
Administration Building, Room A537
Gaithersburg, MD 20899

[1] The moniker "Total Quality Management" was coined by the military in 1985.

Dean L. Hubbard *is President of Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville, MO*

Darrell W. Krueger *is President of Winona State University, Winona, MN*

Outcomes Assessment in the Small College and the Survival of the African Elephant

Arthur R. Murdoch

The future of the African Elephant is at risk. Many forces are operating against the survival of the species. I have not had the opportunity to see this magnificent beast in its natural setting, but I hope, someday, to be able to do so. And more importantly, I hope that this creature continues to share some portion of our ever more crowded world. More than 100 years ago Chief Seattle said "Whatever befalls the creatures will soon also befall man." And I believe that this is even more true today.

And what has this to do with assessment in a small liberal arts college? I submit that there are several parallels. We, too, are at times challenged for our very survival. Our many constituencies demand accountability. Assessment is a necessary means to respond to these challenges. There are many forces at work to make this a daunting process. Many of us do not have the luxury of an institutional research office to carry out this assignment for us, so it is left up to the faculty to design and carry out the assessments necessary to assure future institutional success.

A little over four years ago, I sat in one of the seats in an audience like this. I had recently been asked by the President of our College to chair the self-study steering committee. I was truly honored by the importance of the responsibility that I had been offered, thus accepted the challenge. Yet, as I previewed the task ahead, I became concerned about my ability to discharge this responsibility. As members of the NCA staff may recall, I came to the conference with more than a little reservation about the possibility of carrying out the assessment mandate of the NCA. As a physical scientist, a chemist by training, the rules of sampling and of evidence with which I was familiar, simply could not be applied to this task. After attending several inspiring, reassuring, and challenging workshops and conferences, I came away still skeptical about the process, but with the conviction that it had to be done. I was convinced that we had no choice but to try—and since others had succeeded, we too were creative enough to also complete an acceptable self-study.

Now that the decision had been made to do this seemingly impossible task, we faced the question of ***how***? We had no institutional research office—nor any other central depository of institutional data. In recent years, many of our offices had "computerized" but each had established its own "proprietary" data base and the degree of incompatibility is indicated by the fact that each student would have several different identifying numbers as he/she progressed from inquiry to registration to alumni status. And much of the data "available"—and I put that word in quotes for good reason—were dispersed into separate faculty offices in a variety of files. And in many cases, hard data, even soft data, were at a minimum. Much of what we knew about ourselves was based upon impressions. To a large extent, the College still seemed to operate out of the traditional "hip pocket" mode, relying upon individual memories as a substitute for data. I am sure that many of you may feel this description fits the situation in which you may find yourselves as you begin your assigned task.

Next in order was the selection of the Steering Committee. After seeking the counsel of the principal elected faculty committees, the constitution of the committee and overall outline of the self-study process were set. I share this structure with you because it was successful for us. Each of the five operating units of the College would be represented. Each vice president was asked to select a representative to serve as liaison to the committee, and in all but one case, the vice presidents chose to do so themselves. This assured the necessary cooperation to provide access to whatever we might find tucked away in the various offices. It was then decided to construct our self-study based upon the then four Criteria for Accreditation. We therefore chose a faculty member to serve on the steering committee and act as chair of a subcommittee to focus on each of the Criteria. Incidentally, we later also chose, not surprisingly, to write our self-study based upon the same outline.

As we entered the process, we found that we had several things going for us. All we had to do was find a creative way to identify and "plug into" the resources that were available. First, we had a faculty member who had served recently as Acting Dean. He accepted the Criterion Two (Resources) subcommittee chair. We had a Strategic Planning and Advisory Council that was tapped as the Criterion Four subcommittee (Planning). In addition, we were just completing an all college program review and planning initiative that could be tapped. The Criterion Three subcommittee (Assessment) was chaired by a member of the faculty who was a former public schools superintendent with some experience and interest in educational assessment. The Criterion One (Mission) subcommittee was chaired by a younger faculty member who had shown interest and concern in the direction of "institutional drift" as the mission of the College is defined by its actions. I present these details to show that, when searched for, there is far more expertise and interest in many of the relevant issues among the faculty than may at first seem apparent.

The next apparent task was the constitution of the subcommittees and establishing the overall self-study plan and timeline. The Steering Committee met weekly at first, while this agenda was being completed. Subcommittees were selected by the subcommittee chair, with the advice of the Steering Committee, to assure a representative and compatible group for each task. A timeline was established that would permit publication and review of the self-study before submission to NCA. One significant decision at this time was the publication and wide distribution of the draft self-study. Although wide based input was to be sought throughout the study process, we wished to be sure that every interested person had an opportunity to

review the study before it took final form. Each faculty member, administrator, executive committee of the Board of Trustees, significant operational officer, etc., was to receive a copy of the draft document and was invited to submit desired changes to the text. We chose not to publish a large number of copies of the final form for financial reasons. We felt it was more important to include everyone in the formative stages when their input could affect the self-study than to present them with the finished work. After distribution of the draft document, comments were solicited from any and all interested persons. Numerous constructive and significant written comments were, in fact, received and the suggested revisions and corrections were incorporated as appropriate. This phase of the process ended with an all-college open meeting where oral comments were solicited. It might be of interest to note that, although a few significant issues were raised at this meeting, by this time most concerns had been addressed and the meeting turned out to be fairly short. This strategy resulted in two desirable outcomes: 1) a general attitude of openness and cooperation throughout the self-study process, and 2) a large number of suggestions and corrections that resulted in a final report of superior quality and accuracy than would otherwise have been possible. Copies of the final report were then made available in the College library for review by any interested party.

Now that I have set the stage, let me concentrate upon the work of the Assessment subcommittee. As indicated above, this subcommittee was constituted with the end goal in mind. The membership included a member of the Education Department (educational assessment), a member of the English Department (writing), a member of the Mathematics Department (statistics), and a member of the Psychology Department (social statistics). This group, along with the Chairman, brought considerable skills and relevant experience to this project. Their first objective was to identify and collect all assessment information currently present on campus. Obvious resources were grade records in the Registrar's Office, graduate activities in the offices of the various department chairs and the Alumni Office, and standardized test results. This latter category includes: Graduate Record Exam (GRE), National Teachers Exam (NTA), Law School Aptitude Test (LSAT), and Medical College Aptitude Test (MCAT). As it turned out, these data, especially the LSAT and the MCAT, were at best too sparse and incomplete to be adequate alone as a meaningful assessment tool. Not only had a limited number of our students taken these tests but frequently the results were not available in a form that permitted their use in a meaningful way.

The Committee then turned to seek other sources of data to begin to develop a more complete picture of the success of our programs. This meant generating new information. As a part of the overall College departmental review process mentioned earlier, several departments had indicated an interest in undertaking or expanding an exit interview for their majors. The committee saw this as an opportunity to obtain useful data and thus proposed several open ended questions to be added to the exit interview process. Several departments (five of 18) did, in fact, participate in this activity and helpful information (representing 43 of the 287 graduating seniors (15%)), particularly in the form of anecdotal notes, was obtained.

A third internal source of data that had not been regularized was information from the Placement and Career Development Office. Over the years the College had developed good relations with a number of employers and our graduates had established a good record. We had considerable anecdotal information suggesting favorable assessment of our program.

The Committee, in cooperation with the Placement and Career Development Office, designed a survey to be sent to recruiters who had repeatedly visited our campus, as well as other colleges, and thus had a basis of making evaluatory judgments. Surveys were sent to representatives of 53 employers. Provision was made for anonymous response. Of the surveys sent, 42 (79%) responded. This resulting information contributed significantly to the final report.

It soon became apparent, however, that a major broad based outcomes assessment would be necessary if we were to carry out our evaluation in the manner that we had hoped. As a result of our groundwork studies, we had become aware of the assessment developments spearheaded by Management Services Inc. of the National Center for Higher education Management Systems (NCHEMS), of Boulder, Colorado. Much of this work has been reported in *Assessing Institutional Effectiveness, Redirecting the Self-Study Process* by Peter T. Ewell and Robert P. Lisensky. We contracted NCHEMS to assist us in developing an assessment program to satisfy our goals. As a result, we decided upon the development of two parallel survey instruments—one for continuing students and one for recent alumni. The surveys were constructed with questions that assessed the extent to which students: a) value various outcomes, b) are satisfied with the College's role in promoting these outcomes, and c) behaviorally demonstrate the attainment of these goals. The goals to be assessed were derived from the statement of mission developed in the early part of our self-study process. The questions in the two surveys were to be correlated as far as reasonably possible to permit us to develop a consistent picture of the impact of the Mount Union College experience upon the development of the individual student.

The Alumni Outcomes Assessment Survey (AOAS) was mailed to all Mount Union College undergraduate degree recipients from the graduating classes of 1980 (the "ten year" class) and 1986 to 1990 for whom addresses were available. Prior to mailing the actual survey, an introductory, explanatory letter from the President of the College was sent. The surveys were coded to permit follow-up in both tracking responders and later data analysis and comparison with the individual undergraduate records. The survey was sent in May with a reminder to non-responders in June. Of the 1195 targeted participants, 568 (48%) responded. The response forms were sent to NCHEMS for data entry and initial analysis. The report from NCHEMS became a part of our NCA Self-Study Report.

The Continuing Student Survey (CSS) was, as mentioned above, developed with questions, in so far as possible, parallel to the alumni survey instrument. Necessary changes were made in the areas of personal information and several questions were restated to reflect student status. The information sought was, however, congruent with that sought on the alumni survey. Common core questions were included on both instruments to provide points of comparison of student vs. alumni responses on goals, attitudes, perceptions, and goal related activities of the campus environment. It was intended that this survey would both provide reference background for the alumni outcomes data and provide a base for later alumni surveys of the current student participants. The student survey differed from the alumni survey in two major respects: first it was administered in a class period under faculty supervision and second it was anonymous.

Classes where it was to be administered were selected based upon the size and nature of the student population to attempt to attain a representative sample from all classes and all areas

of majors. Twenty six classes in 18 departments were asked to participate and all agreed to do so. As the classes occurred at different periods over two days, students were asked to not complete a second survey form to avoid duplication. The results indicate 510 students (39% of total student body) completed surveys and included 97 seniors (19% of responders), 143 juniors (28% of responders), 122 sophomores (24% of responders), and 144 freshmen (28% of responders). By design, most of the College's 33 defined majors were represented by numbers of responders in proportions similar to the student body as a whole. The second factor, anonymity, was to help assure reliable responses. The student body had been informed of the planned survey, its intent and importance to the College. The participating faculty members reviewed this information prior to administering the survey to the class. For several reasons, it would have been desirable to have the ability to trace responses over a student career and into alumni years and to make many other types of cross comparisons, e.g., majors, activities, grade points, etc. It was felt, however, that the responses would be more reliable if the possibility of identification did not exist. The question of the anonymity of this survey in future offerings has yet to be decided.

As with the Alumni Survey, the forms were sent to NCHEMS for data entry and initial analysis. In the case of both of these surveys, the survey forms, along with the raw data were returned to us accompanying NCHEMS final report. We have used the data from the surveys to greatly expand the cross correlations originally requested, and in fact, still continue to draw upon this information as various questions arise where these data are relevant. Thus, not only did this endeavor provide much of the base for our self-evaluation for the NCA review, but it has continued to provide important information as institutional decisions are being considered.

One important question still is to be resolved: What of the future? We believe that we have established a useful baseline for institutional self-assessment. The College is committed to build upon this base with continued assessment activities. Due to the complexity of the evaluative process, especially data work-up, and limited resources to complete this task, annual surveys were not considered. Current plans look towards periodically repeating the evaluation process, review of standardized test results, departmental exit interview responses, the employer survey, and surveys of both continuing students and alumni, to assure a continuity of data but at sufficient intervals to both avoid becoming a "nuisance" to repeat responders and to permit the conversion of the large reservoir of data obtained to useful information. One concern is that accumulation of these data is of little use if we do not have in place the resources and mechanism to convert them to the information necessary to have an impact on the future direction of College activities. Current probabilities are for an alternate year or at most an every three year cycle. Decisions on these questions are currently pending.

I would be less than candid with you if I implied that all went smoothly. Be assured, we had our share of anxiety. We had decided upon a faculty directed, communally developed self-study. Schedule conflicts arose and subcommittees found it difficult to complete their tasks in a timely fashion. Duplications of effort, thus occasional conflicts of directions, arose between our work and that of other committees considering aspects of the future of the College. As the Director of the self-study was not a member of the administration, actions and decisions that had an impact on the self-study were discovered "after the fact." And as

And as will be the case, faculty went on vacation, or on sabbatical, and writing "deadlines" came and went. Timelines were strained to the limit. Several pages of written comments were received the day before the whole document was to go to the printers. Nevertheless, throughout it all, good-will prevailed, assessment was undertaken. (Note, I do not say completed. Assessment is a process, not a task that ever ends.) Our self-study was completed on time.

I wish to mention one final "design" feature. As we were developing our assessment data, it became obvious that we would have a lot of information that we wished to accompany the self-study to support the narrative. The appendix would be nearly as large as the report text. Because of the desirability of ready cross comparisons, etc., it was decided to publish and bind the self-study in two volumes: 1) the Report and 2) the Appendix to Accompany the Report. Among other things, this permitted us to include all desired support material in the Appendix without resulting in an unwieldy volume. We were pleased with the results of this process, and I believe that it contributed to the overall success of our self-study.

Thus, in spite of my initial reservations, we have shown that a faculty committee ***can*** design and execute a college assessment program to use as a basis of a college self-study. It is important to recognize that much data necessary for this process are likely already at hand, and additional resources are waiting to be recognized and tapped. The process requires determination, cooperation, and, most of all, a conviction that the task must, and can, be done. The first ingredient is there—***it must be done.*** Not only do colleges face pressures from their own constituencies, but NCA has decreed that assessment must be a part of the self-study. I hope that I have convinced you that it can be done.

Now, how does all this relate to the African Elephant? As with college assessment, few would argue that the goal of its survival is laudable. All that is needed to assure its continued existence among us is a consensus that we need it for our own well-being, maybe even for our own survival. If we, as members of the human race truly believe that it must survive, the will and the way will be found. Let us hope that, just as the will and the way to college assessment has become a part of faculty life, the African Elephant will continue to have its "day in the sun"! With proper planning and dedicated work, both the small liberal arts college and the African Elephant can survive and continue to contribute to the future of the world of which both are now a part!

Resources

The following resources were cited or used during our self-study process.

Primary guiding resource:

Ewell, Peter T. and Robert P. Lisensky. 1988. *Assessing institutional effectiveness, Redirecting the self-study process.* Washington, D.C.: Consortium for the Advancement of Private Higher Education.

Other valuable resources:

Kells, H.R. 1988. *Self-study processes, A guide for postsecondary and similar service-oriented institutions and programs.* 3d Ed. New York: American Council on Education, Macmillan Publishing Company.

Nichols, James O. 1989. *Institutional effectiveness and outcomes assessment implementation on campus; A practitioners handbook.* New York: Agathon Press.

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. 1991. *Assessment workbook.* Chicago: North Central Association. (Prepared for use in the NCA Regional Seminars on Assessing Academic Student Achievement, Spring 1991.)

***Arthur R. Murdoch** is Professor of Chemistry at Mount Union College, Alliance, OH*

The Model for Judging Educational Quality at Saint Norbert College– Does It Measure Up?

Sally Ann Brickner

History of Assessment Activities

Assessment of the College's goals through a study of student feedback has a long history at St. Norbert. In 1977-78, the College established the Goals Impact Committee, which was charged with evaluating the impact of the College on the personal, moral, and intellectual development of the students. Under the leadership of Dr. Eliot Elfner, the Committee designed a thirty-item questionnaire for students regarding their personal goals. Administration of the survey to students upon entrance and each December thereafter enabled the Committee to conduct longitudinal analyses of perceptual changes. Reports derived from these surveys provided information about how the College was assisting students in achieving their personal goals.

In addition to the Goals Impact Studies, the College used other forms of evaluation to determine whether goals had been attained. These included surveys (alumni, students, and faculty); audits (courses, programs); portfolios (art); recitals (music); senior seminars; annual reports from department heads. Recognizing a need for a comprehensive plan that would provide systematic feedback in relation to the College's goals, and in anticipation of the forthcoming self-study process for the North Central Association, the Academic Dean appointed an Assessment Task Force in 1989. The Task Force has become a standing committee of the College, with membership from each of the College's three academic divisions as well as representatives from each of the Vice-Presidential jurisdictional areas. Students also have representation.

First Steps in Designing the College's Plan

Members of the Assessment Task Force reflected on the mission and goals of the College and specific policies pertaining to research that appear in its publications. They developed a

philosophical statement regarding program evaluation and review at the College that the faculty endorsed on October 23, 1990. The statement served as a framework for the design and evaluation of the College's Assessment Program.

The Task Force surveyed all departments and developed a database that provided information on approximately 150 reports, studies, and data sets available at the College. The Task Force also asked each academic department about its goals and their relationship to the College's mission, its current forms of assessment, the information it would find helpful for achieving its goals, and future plans for assessment. One need that surfaced from this study was a call for systematic feedback from alumni. As part of the self-study, the College was conducting a survey of alumni through its Survey Center, and intended to continue annual surveys of graduates for a cycle of at least five years.

The College's Assessment Program

Literature in higher education during the last decade is replete with calls for the assessment of academic achievement. Such assessment would be necessary, but not sufficient, for a comprehensive assessment program at St. Norbert College since its strategic goals extended across all areas of the College. On a two-way grid, the Task Force listed the College's strategic goals, identified the various indicators of quality that provide evidence of achievement of the goals, named the decision-makers who use the findings, and enumerated program changes that have occurred as a result of the analysis of information gathered both internally and externally.

An important recommendation of experts regarding assessment is that educational institutions should rely on multiple indicators of quality. In accord with this criterion, the College's assessment program provides that decision-makers have information from multiple sources as a basis for evaluating programs in relation to goals and making changes that will promote program improvement. Evidence is garnered from observations of behavior: patterns in enrollment, financial data, placement, recruitment and retention statistics, attendance patterns for campus events. Additionally, the College tracks perceptual data: surveys of participant opinion, program or course audits, Goals Impact Studies.

How Does the Program Measure Up?

The North Central Visiting Team lauded the College's Assessment Program in its Team Visit Report of 1991. The Program is comprehensive, and flows from the College's mission statement. It has a conceptual framework based on a philosophy statement and the College's strategic goals. It involves individuals across all divisions of the College and employs multiple measures, both behavioral and perceptual, to indicate quality. Finally, program improvement is the goal as well as the demonstrated outcome of the College's assessment activities.

Appendix: Table 5.1. Judging Educational Quality - The Assessment Program at St. Norbert College

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Sally Ann Brickner *is Associate Academic Dean at St. Norbert College, DePere, WI*

Table 5.1 Judging Educational Quality

Strategic Goal	1. Attract/retain a more academically talented student body	2. Attract/retain a more diverse student body	3. Attract/retain an excellent faculty
Indicators of Quality **BEHAVIORAL**	• Entering student aptitude/ achievement • Academic action Probation/Dismissal • Retention Overall Honors Program • Honors/Awards	• Enrollment statistics • Menominee Teacher Education Program • Patterns in faculty recruitment/new course development • Exchange Programs	• Patterns in Recruitment (qualifications) Retention (turnover) • Faculty evaluation Non-tenured (annual) Tenured (five-year) Promotion and tenure reviews/patterns • Awards Programs for Teaching (1973-) Scholarship (1986-) Community Service (1987-) • Outcomes of Faculty Development Program
PERCEPTUAL	• CIRP Survey of Entering Students (longitudinal) • Goals Impact Survey (longitudinal - SNC) • 1990 Enrolled Student Survey–SNC • Dehne Study of Inquiry Pool (1989-90)	• Alumni Survey (annual)	• Student Opinion of Teaching (1984-) • Alumni Survey (annual) • Advisement Survey • HERI Faculty Survey (1989-90) • CUES Twenty-Year Follow-Up Study (1968-1988)
Decision Makers	• Admission Staff Committee • Director of Academic Advisement • Academic Advisors • Academic Dean • Dean of Student Life	• Admission Staff Committee • Administrative Staff Dean for Cultural Diversity Academic Dean	• Recruitment Disciplinary Faculty Divisional Chairs Academic Dean President • Retention Faculty Member Faculty Personnel Committee Academic Dean President/Board of Trustees
Program Changes	• Honors Program in General Education (1984) • Goals on class size, quality, composition (1985) • Admission: Committee established (1988) Consultant employed (George Dehne, 1989) Faculty involved more (1990) • Marketing Plan (1990) • Financial Aid Policy changes • Academic Mastery Program (1988) • Committee on Academic Climate and Culture (1988) • New Majors: CIS; IS; IE • Academic Clubs/Activities	• Cultural Diversity Pastoral Visions • Committee: Student Life (1988) College-wide (1990) • Office of Cultural Diversity (1989-) • Financial Aid Policy Changes for Minorities • Exchange Programs • Support Programs Write Place (1977) Academic Mastery (1988) • Pre-College Programs	• Policy: Joint Appointment • Faculty Development Committee/Program (1985) • Faculty Awards (annual) Teaching (1973-) Scholarship (1986-) Community Service (1987-)

The Assessment Program at St. Norbert College

4. Enhance a strong General Education and Honors Program	5. Expand the international dimensions of the curriculum/College	6. Provide quality instructional programs, resources, and facilities	7. Identify and develop additional funding sources
• Faculty load/grade distribution reports • GPA overall; major • Writing Skills Development • Honors Program • Degree Evaluation Process	• Patterns in Study Abroad • On-site Review of Programs Abroad • External Reviews of Grants/Majors (IS and IBLAS) • Enrollment in: Language study Majors (IS; IBLAS) • Speaker Series; Arts; Films; Global Ecology	• Patterns in enrollment in majors • Usage statistics - annual reports from departments • Write Place • Academic Mastery Program • Assessment in majors Internal audits External reviews • Placement of Graduates • Instructional Support Fund • Comparisons with peer/competitor schools	• Increased staffing for Institutional Advancement • Successful Capital Campaigns/growth of plant fund • Increase in number of grant proposals/yield rate in money from government and foundations • Alumni Survey - contributions to Alumni Fund/other
• Senior Survey (1985-) • Faculty Survey (1989) • Alumni (annual) • Program Audits Courses Areas • Goals Impact Survey • Focused Interview on GSXII (1991) • Honors Program Surveys (1989; 1991)	• Alumni Survey (annual) • Study Abroad Survey (1991) • Senior Survey-General Education and Honors (1985-)	• Goals Impact Survey • Alumni Survey (annual) • Departmental reports (annual)	• Public re cost of education • Marketing costs
• Committees: General Education and Honors Curriculum and Education Policy • Faculty/Academic Advisors • Honors Program Director • Academic Dean • Registrar	• Committees: International Studies Advisory IBLAS Advisory Board Undergraduate International Education International Center Coordinating Committee • Faculty • AAC/President	• President/AAC • Divisional Chairs • Faculty • Administrative Directors	• President/AAC • Office of Institutional Advancement • Faculty
• Honors Program (1984) • Verbal Skills: Writing requirement expanded to all Upper Biennium courses (1991-92) • Senior Colloquium (GSXII) (1990-91) • Western Tradition (GSX) and Global Society (GSXI), added (1991-92)	• Development of majors IS (1985) IE (1990) • Global Society (GSXI) in General Education (1991-92) • Language Programs German major (1989) Japanese Russian • Exchange Programs/FLTA's Hunan, China Sophia, Japan Münster, Germany Kharkov, Ukraine • International Awareness Week (1984-) • International Center (1990) • Committees added ICCC (1990) UIE (1990) • Director of International Education (1991)	• Facilities Renovation Construction • Resource development Survey Center Cooperative Education/Internship Academic Mastery Leadership Community Service (Outreach) Multicultural	• Mission and goals affirmed • Summer revenue sources • Marketing strategies • International Center • Use of other Assets

Assessment at the University of Arkansas: A Progress Report

Nancy Talburt

Assessment at the University of Arkansas is not yet coordinated and focused. It consists of many separate efforts—some old, some new—but we have instituted plans and programs over the last two years to make important changes. What follow here are examples of what has been done at a comprehensive research institution to provide a basis and a context for assessment and to make assessment of student academic achievement a productive and useful activity.

Current assessment includes, among other things, what is done in connection with regular program evaluations required by the Arkansas Board of Higher Education, the state coordinating body for higher education, and by the University. Undergraduate and graduate programs are evaluated on a ten-year cycle and varying amounts of assessment are part of this process. The process does identify the more significant, or most visible, concerns and strengths. As a way of assessing learning in core courses, we administer standardized tests (the ACT CAAP) to representative samples of those completing college algebra and freshman English, a program of testing now in its second year that provides specific student academic achievement data. For more than thirty years we have also required that all students pass the Junior English Examination, a measure of student academic achievement in composition. In addition, many individual program areas have typical or special assessment activities, ranging from what is required for professional accreditation to capstone courses, exit interviews, senior projects and theses, and recitals. Finally, for a dozen years graduating seniors have been asked to complete a survey assessing their educational experience at the University, and we have a response rate of close to ninety percent.

Four specific new assessment initiatives may be noteworthy. The first consisted of our appointing a strong committee to develop a campus assessment plan in response to the need to document student academic achievement for the North Central Association. We secured the agreement of a senior and well-respected department chair to chair the committee and included a reference librarian and a representative from continuing education (independent study) along with representatives from each school and college. We provided resources to the

committee including sending five to attend the AAHE assessment conference. We also provided an administrator to serve as the committee's resource.

The committee developed an excellent bibliography of information on assessment and reviewed what appeared to be the major contributions to the literature. Those attending the conference reported to the group. The group reviewed assessment practices of all kinds already in place on campus. We were reminded, for example, of the introduction of capstone courses, the uses of student portfolios in studio subjects, and the existence of licensing and qualifying examinations in many fields, such as law, engineering, and architecture. We determined to draft a plan for assessment in the form of a document that would not penalize disciplines with good assessment practices in place but that would allow those in more traditional and less professional areas to develop programs of assessment to fit their needs and which would ensure that assessment in all areas conforms to currently accepted ideas of professional good practice.

The campus assessment guidelines, the final draft or the approved version, depending upon our progress, will be distributed for discussion during the program session on April 5 in Chicago. A very elaborate review process has been felt to be necessary for a policy affecting every program, student, and faculty member on campus.

In a second initiative, campus plans for a parallel assessment and evaluation of offices and functions throughout the university have reached the second draft stage. These plans focus on resource allocation and use and on office or function productivity and effectiveness. To have planning for office and function assessment move forward together with planning for assessing student academic achievements tends to balance what is required of the different campus constituencies and produce a better climate for both efforts.

A third major initiative was a state event for which the university shared responsibility. The Arkansas ACT Council, in cooperation with the Arkansas Department of Higher Education, sponsored a state-wide conference on assessment. The one-day event featured a morning program and an afternoon session. In the morning, speakers from the North Central Association spoke on the new requirement for assessment of student academic achievement, the rationale behind the requirement, and the characteristics of a good assessment plan. In the afternoon, an assistant vice president for research from ACT spoke on uses of standardized testing in assessment programs, including evaluation of developmental and remedial programs. Attendance was about three times what was expected. The meeting and its discussions suggested a high degree of interest and concern regarding implementation of needed assessment programs throughout the state.

A fourth initiative occurred when our mathematics faculty conducted an assessment of the institutional placement examination for mathematics as compared with the enhanced ACT, which provides subscores not formerly available. Extensive trials and analysis yielded the data that the university test, cherished for years and administered with trouble and cost for us and trauma for our freshmen, was unnecessary, except as a back-up (to give students a second chance to avoid remediation). We have saved money and effort and freed orientation time to put to better use for our freshmen. Though this is not the usual sort of assessment, it involves institutional learning and change of attitude and action.

Parallel to these specific assessment activities, we have made additional changes that may have even more dramatic effect on the success of our assessments of student academic achievement. I consider these success stories.

One such change is the introduction of a new freshman course, the Freshman Scholars' Seminar, which is destined to become the most assessed offering in our institution's history, partly because it belongs to no college and teaches no subject. We believe that we are the first institution to attempt to design a special course of this kind (we do not call it a success course) in the seminar mode for high-ability freshmen. It is multi-disciplinary and activist, and our faculty, predictably, learned even more from teaching it this year than their students. It has created a modest ferment of interest in teaching and teaching freshmen on our campus and a camaraderie among the teachers that has exhibited itself in many places. Equally important, it has provided an excellent assessment tool, as teachers conduct lengthy interviews, typically twice a semester, with all students in the course.

The second success story has several stages. In the fall of 1991, we administered the survey on faculty attitudes toward teaching and research developed at Syracuse, with a variation of our own, and in January we offered faculty the opportunity to hear the results presented by one of the individuals from the Center for Instructional Effectiveness at Syracuse. Our survey response rate was almost double the national average and a significant percent of the faculty attended the January program.

As a follow up to these activities that identified a perception that teaching was undervalued and under-rewarded, and out of balance, with research at our institution, we planned the first institutional conference for all deans and department heads and chairpersons to discuss teaching. We also secured the active participation of members of the University of Arkansas Teaching Academy, a society established by our Chancellor in 1988 for our most honored teachers, and the participation of the Chancellor, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The purpose of the two-day conference, *Focus on Teaching*, was to develop specific action plans for each college and the administration on ways to improve support for teaching and faculty development of teaching strengths, evaluation and assessment of teaching effectiveness, and incorporation of teaching achievement into the reward structure, including annual evaluations for merit pay increases, promotion, and tenure. The conference was an unusual success. We created a sense of community, we shared good ideas among departments and colleges that had already instituted practices that are working well, and we came up with some excellent plans. Key to the ability to incorporate teaching achievement into the reward structure is improved ability to document it. It really cannot be done without the component of student learning. We now have a large and excellent carrot to lead us to identify and employ effective assessment techniques for determining how we are doing in our teaching.

During the fall semester of this year, many plans from the *Focus on Teaching* conference were implemented. A Teaching and Faculty Support Center opened, directed by three outstanding faculty members having part-time appointments. The Center sponsors luncheons for new faculty and has established a great number of teaching support programs. Mentoring in the development of teaching portfolios is a major effort planned to begin next fall. Elsewhere on campus exit interviews have been implemented for graduating seniors in some programs; a performance requirement for seniors is being planned in the program in drama; capstone

courses have been designed to assess student learning on the required college courses in the College of Agriculture and Home Economics. A faculty committee is redesigning the institutional process for teaching and course evaluation. Changes in each college and school reflect a renewed emphasis on teaching support and faculty development.

As we planned our *Focus on Teaching* conference, our Chancellor pointed out that we were attempting to change attitudes and to change behavior, and that it would be slow work. We were also challenging some of the most cherished myths of academia. It may be external pressure that forces us into assessment, but probably neither the assessment movement nor the pressures of state mandates, although these will have an effect. Economic pressures may apply the final pressure, economic pressures growing out of the costs of educating students for four or five years, the challenges of recruiting and placing students, and the costs of competing for those who measure up to our standards.

Still, the convincing and compelling reasons for assessment that are going to produce the best results are intrinsic. Those who really want to know how they are doing and want to do better, need no further motivation. They need the support, respect, and resources of their institution to carry out assessment, and they need a little shelter from the chorus of nay-sayers. They need to seek the assistance of those who have some professional expertise to share. And they need to build assessment into the scheme of things, incorporate it in the institutional fabric. Before it is buried without a trace in business as usual, however, assessment needs to be rigorously examined, once put into practice, both for the results it achieves and its own integrity and efficiency. Even more important is the need to have assessment serve a larger purpose and be seen to. Here indeed is the crux. We have moved slower at the University of Arkansas because we have begun by attending to the larger purpose. It is too early to say what the assessment program here will be and do, but the progress we have made along the way is both encouraging and heartening.

Nancy Talburt *is Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs at University of Arkansas in Fayetteville, AR*

Using Total Quality Leadership to Develop a Model to Measure the Accomplishment of Student Goals and Institutional Effectiveness

Dennis Ladwig

Lakeshore Technical College's (LTC) commitment to quality and to creating a culture for institutional effectiveness began in 1982 when the college implemented a Quality Circles (QC) program. Moving from QC to a Total Quality Leadership (TQL) program based on the principles of customer focus, continuous improvement, and employee involvement has created opportunities to assess student academic achievement, create institutional effectiveness, and carry out the mission, purposes, and vision of the college.

In February 1992, LTC was the first Wisconsin technical college visited with the NCA Commission's Statement on Assessment and Student Academic Achievement in effect. Using a TQL process enabled LTC to build a foundation in its efforts to measure the accomplishment of student academic achievement and institutional effectiveness.

Daniel Seymour, in his book, *On Q: Causing Quality in Higher Education,* stated:

> The focus of student assessment, for example, is thinking—and I mean really thinking—about a series of very basic questions:
>
> What do I want my student-customers to achieve?
>
> Are they getting it?
>
> Exactly how are they getting it?
>
> What do I need to change?

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this presentation is to share Lakeshore Technical College's Total Quality Leadership philosophy in developing a student academic achievement model and processes as well as share LTC's expectation of TQL. This expectation has an impact on institutional effectiveness. The commitment to the Total Quality Leadership way of thinking and doing has an impact on the college's operational and planning activities. Both will be supported by a case study.

The presentation is designed so that participants will:

1. Be informed of a TQL process to develop a student academic achievement-institutional effectiveness model.
2. See the difference in a commitment to a new way of thinking and operating compared to a commitment to a new management program title.
3. Recognize the depth of responsibility that the expectation of TQL requires of each member of the college staff.
4. Recognize the importance of the "healing organization" concept in assisting the college and staff to simultaneously cope with change, increase effectiveness, promote a team concept, and carry out the mission, purposes, and vision of the college.
5. Understand the importance of data and management planning tools.
6. Receive resources and assistance in understanding TQL.

Reference

Seymour, Daniel T. 1991. *On Q: Causing quality in higher education.* New York: MacMillan, Inc.

***Dennis Ladwig** is President of Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, WI*

Developing a Statewide Assessment Policy for Oklahoma

Joe Wiley

The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education consists of twenty-six publicly funded institutions of higher education—thirteen two-year colleges, ten senior universities, two comprehensive/research universities, and one higher education center. Overall coordination of the state system in the areas of policy and budget allocation has been constitutionally assigned to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE).

During the period of 1987-1990, the OSRHE staff and chief academic officers from state institutions discussed assessment in general terms and explored elements of a statewide assessment policy. In the spring of 1990, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education instructed the Oklahoma Higher Education Chancellor to develop a statewide policy to assess student outcomes. A committee was formed, comprised of State Regents' staff and institutional chief academic officers to develop and submit for State Regents' consideration a statewide policy on assessment. The committee was charged with one overarching principle: "To develop a policy on assessment recognizing institutional autonomy and the Regents' constitutional responsibility for statewide accountability."

Upon meeting, the committee agreed that before a policy could be developed, two issues must be resolved: 1) what is assessment, and 2) under what basic principles of assessment would the committee operate?

The definition of assessment that was agreed upon was:

> Assessment is a multi-dimensional evaluative process that measures the overall educational impact of the college/university experience on students and provides information for making program improvements.

Moreover, eleven basic principles were adopted and used to guide the committee in policy development:

1. Assessment within the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education should be consistent with the national movement and North Central Association guidelines in order to provide integrity and efficient utilization of state resources.

2. Assessment activities will be linked with program review and strategic planning in order to improve institutional effectiveness in the delivery of educational programs.

3. Assessment should be an integral part of the larger picture of evaluating institutional effectiveness and should be accomplished in a systematic manner.

4. Since the primary purpose of assessment is to improve student learning and student development, assessment information should be used primarily for internal program improvement purposes and not for inter-institutional comparisons.

5. Individual student assessment information must be properly safeguarded to maintain confidentiality of personal data. Aggregate institutional information should be made available on a voluntary basis only for research purposes by qualified research groups.

6. Assessment activities within the state system should be designed to measure student academic achievement and student development within the context of both educational programs and the student development/learning environment.

7. Assessment programs of Oklahoma public institutions must include multiple measures that are carefully selected and integrated to provide information on the mastery of competencies, as well as "value-added" aspects of educational programs.

8. Campus-based assessment programs should be developed under the leadership of the local faculty and appropriate staff. Faculty must have a major role in developing programs that measure student academic achievement since they will be responsible for making improvements in academic programs. Faculty should have significant input into programs.

9. In order to validate the academic development of students, assessment programs in Oklahoma should address different educational levels. Junior colleges should address entry-level/placement, exit-level (program outcomes) assessment, and student satisfaction. Senior and research universities should address entry-level/placement, mid-level, exit-level (program outcomes) assessment, and student satisfaction. An implication of this statement is that both progress within general education and within the academic major should be assessed.

10. Assessment programs should consider the needs of special populations in the development of policies and procedures.

11. Assessment programs will vary depending on the type of institution and student population.

The committee surveyed all Oklahoma higher education institutions in order to ascertain what assessment activities were currently in place. In May 1991, Southeastern Oklahoma State University, through a grant funded by the Oklahoma State Regents, hosted a statewide conference on assessment. The conference featured national leaders on assessment in order to give the committee and institutional faculty a sense of direction on the assessment issue.

Following the May 1991 conference, the committee intensified its efforts resulting in the presentation of a statewide policy on student assessment to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, which was unanimously adopted in October 1991.

The policy, to be presented at the NCA Annual Meeting, was written as a dynamic instrument, explicitly defining the kinds of activities required, yet maintaining institutional autonomy and allowing for faculty ownership. Fundamental components of the policy include:

1. Assessment at entry-level/placement, mid-level, and exit-level (program outcomes).
2. Assessment of student satisfaction.
3. Annual reporting of aggregate assessment results.

The policy also requires institutions to submit to the State Regents for approval a preliminary institutional plan for assessment by January 1, 1992, with programs fully operational by spring 1993. Institutional assessment plans were required to contain components such as current assessment activities, proposed activities, verification of faculty ownership, how assessment will be evaluated, and implementation timelines. Institutions are in the process of updating their respective plans.

During the interval of 1985-1991, faculty and academic officers at several state institutions explored assessment concepts and measures, and debated whether assessment programs should be developed on their campuses. The appearance of the North Central Association policy on student academic achievement ended those debates. The subsequent OSRHE policy articulated several general levels and elements of assessment for Oklahoma institutions, and has served as a guide for the development of assessment plans in public Oklahoma institutions.

The approach that one institution (Southeastern Oklahoma State University) used to develop an assessment program will be described in the presentation. After the SOSU President appointed an ad hoc University Assessment Committee in September 1989, SOSU developed a statement of "Principles and Purposes of Assessment," which charged various campus entities to develop assessment plans and programs. At the Program Outcomes level, faculty in the departments responded by developing statements of expected student outcomes for the graduates of their programs. As satisfactory performance levels were stated, appropriate assessment measures were also identified and linked to the outcomes. A university-wide, entry-level and placement program was established by the Office of Academic Affairs and implemented in the Summer 1991. A mid-level assessment program is being initiated through the exploration of a nationally standardized mid-level assessment instrument, after which the assessment program will be refined and finalized. Program follow-up and student satisfaction assessment have been developed and linked to program review and institutional self-study processes.

***Joe Wiley** is Vice President for Academic Affairs at Southeastern Oklahoma State University, Durant, OK*

Assessment: From Matriculation Through Post-Graduation– The Seminole Junior College Plan

Jack L. Medlock
Richard Leeper

College Mission

Seminole Junior College exists to improve the intellectual, physical, social, and ethical environment of society by expanding the knowledge of individuals within that society through provision of formal coursework, alternate learning experiences, and support services.

Assessment Philosophy

Throughout the nation there is a need for accurate assessment information on the effectiveness of community and junior colleges in meeting student and community needs. Valid and reliable assessment procedures and methodologies specifically designed for use by community colleges to accurately assess their effectiveness must be developed.

Seminole Junior College maintains its commitment to collegewide institutional effectiveness. Even prior to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education adopting a systemwide policy for institutional assessment, and the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools' including assessment as a major section of the evaluation process for continued accreditation, Seminole Junior College was actively assessing incoming students, placing them in appropriate courses, and routinely conducting graduate and student satisfaction surveys.

The crucial question at Seminole Junior College is, "To what extent is our institution effective?" Although there are many factors that contribute to the effectiveness of this institution in meeting its mission, the following have been identified as being especially significant: 1) presenting quality, comprehensive, and accessible programs; 2) ensuring student retention and satisfaction; 3) fostering student satisfaction and success after graduation or transfer; 4) implementing sound, effective, efficient resource management; and 5) maintaining visionary organizational management and involvement.

To determine the extent of institutional effectiveness, the following areas have been targeted for internal assessment at Seminole Junior College:

- general education core competencies;
- academic program quality;
- student retention and attrition factors;
- alumni and employer satisfaction;
- developmental education effectiveness;
- ease of transfer between SJC and four-year institutions and student academic success at receiving institutions;
- cooperative agreements between SJC and area Vocational Technical Schools;
- Collegiate Academic Assessment Program Pilot Project (CAAP) results; and
- student development (value-added) for each academic course.

Purpose of Assessment

The purpose of the student assessment program at Seminole Junior College is to assess student learning and development, beginning at the point of matriculation into SJC, continuing through the point of exit from SJC, and concluding with the post-SJC experience; to gather information that will be used to enhance student learning and development, and to improve the overall effectiveness of the institution. Moreover, primary purposes for outcomes assessment include improving teaching and learning processes; improving teaching and learning environments; making the college more accountable to constituents; and linking instructional objectives and educational services to student learning and development.

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Assessment Policy

In 1991 the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) adopted an assessment policy for institutions that comprise the state system of higher education. The policy states "...student assessment in the Oklahoma State System of Higher Education is defined as a multi-dimensional evaluative process that measures the overall educational impact of

the college/university experience on students and provides information for making program improvements."

The policy further states that

> Each college and university shall assess individual student performance in achieving its programmatic objectives. Specifically, each institution will develop criteria, subject to State Regents' approval, for the evaluation of students at college entry to determine academic preparation and course placement; mid-level assessment to determine basic skill competencies; exit assessment to evaluate the outcomes in the student's major; and student perception of program quality including satisfaction with support services, academic curriculum, and the faculty. Such evaluation criteria must be tied to stated program outcomes and learner competencies.

- **Entry Level and Placement.** According to the OSRHE policy, "The purpose of entry-level assessment is to assist institutional faculties and counselors in making decisions that will give students the best possible chance of success in attaining their academic goals. State System institutions are required to develop and implement systems of student assessment of basic level competencies in areas such as reading, writing, mathematics, and science. These basic assessment programs include evaluation of past academic performance, educational readiness, educational goals and study skills, values, self-concept, and motivation. Student assessment results should be utilized in the placement and advisement process to ensure that students enroll in courses appropriate for their skill levels."

- **Mid-Level Assessment.** The OSRHE policy states, "Generally, mid-level assessment competencies are gained through the student's general education program. Thus, the results of mid-level assessment should be used to improve the institution's program of general education. Assessment at mid-level is designed to assess the student's academic progress and learning competencies in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and critical thinking. Mid-level assessments will normally occur after the student has completed forty-five semester hours and prior to the completion of seventy semester hours for students in baccalaureate programs. For associate degree programs assessment may occur at mid-level or at the end of the degree program."

- **Program Outcomes Assessment.** The OSRHE policy states, "Program outcomes assessment, or major field of study assessment, is the third component of the State Regent's policy. Such assessments should be designed to measure how well students are meeting institutionally stated program goals and objectives. Selection of the assessment instruments and other parameters is the responsibility of the institution subject to State Regent's approval as previously specified. Preference should be given to nationally standardized instruments."

- **Student Satisfaction Assessment.** Students who have achieved their educational objectives, and students who are currently enrolled should have an opportunity to express their perceptions of the quality of their educational experience, the adequacy of institutional support services, and their overall impression of the institution. Data from follow-up surveys can be used to determine program effectiveness, discover competen-

cies requiring more emphasis, and identify facilities, equipment, and services needing improvement.

Assessment at Seminole Junior College

In view of the mandate from the OSRHE, the requirements of NCA, and the desire to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the institution, Seminole Junior College has developed and begun implementation of an extensive plan that addresses entry level assessment and placement, mid-level assessment, program outcomes assessment, and student satisfaction assessment.

- **Entry Level Assessment and Placement at SJC.** The ACT is used to determine the "first cut" for course placement in English and reading. Students scoring at a minimal level on the ACT English and the ACT Reading subtests are required to take an ASSET exam and are placed in classes according to the results. The ACT is also used as an indicator for math placement. However, each student wishing to enroll in a mathematics course is required to sit for an ASSET exam and is placed in the appropriate mathematics course according to his/her score.

  Additional entry level assessments include the Toledo Chemistry Exam for students wishing to enroll in Introduction to Chemistry or General College Chemistry I. Also, the Nelson-Denny Reading Exam is administered to students enrolled in Developmental Reading and to students wishing to enter the Associate Degree Registered Nursing Program.

- **Mid-Level and Student Progress Assessment.** During the Fall of 1991, the SJC Assessment Committee developed an extensive "course-embedded assessment" plan which includes several options structured to determine "value-added" for each academic course. Options that may be exercised include: Divisionally Adopted Pre- and Post Tests; Pre- and Post Writing Assignments; Pre- and Post Performance Tests; Individual Instructor Designed Pre- and Post Tests; Book/Reading Assignment Written Summaries; Magazine/Journal Assignment Written Summaries; Creative Assessment (instructor developed option); and combinations of any of the listed options.

  Additionally, the CAAP exit and the National League for Nursing Achievement exams are used for mid-level and student progress assessment.

- **Program Outcomes Assessment.** A comprehensive annual review is conducted for each academic program. This review involves cooperative efforts between each academic division of the institution and the office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education conduct a review of all institutional technical programs every five years. Also, student results on NCLEX and NAACLS national exams are closely monitored to determine program effectiveness.

- **Student Satisfaction Assessment.** A Student Opinion Survey is administered biennially to a statistically significant sample of the student population, and the SJC

Graduate Survey is sent annually to each student who graduated during the previous academic year. Other assessment instruments administered periodically include: Community Opinion Surveys; Employer Surveys; and the Student Drop/Withdrawal Surveys.

Instruments used to evaluate institutional personnel include: Student Evaluations of Faculty; Administrative Evaluations of Subordinates and Superordinates; and Chairperson Evaluations of Faculty.

Conceptual Model

The conceptual model adopted by Seminole Junior College indicates that institutional influence involves both academic and social systems and that academic and social integration are necessary for academic and social development. The model further indicates that there are many factors that contribute to and assist in student development. The interaction of various factors that contribute to student development as influenced by the institution are depicted in Figure 1.

Conclusion

Although most of the pieces of the assessment puzzle have been identified, there has not been enough time lapse for complete implementation of the plan, nor enough time lapse to evaluate the effectiveness of each element of the plan. Both of these important considerations will be accomplished in the future.

Appendix: Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Jack L. Medlock *is Vice President for Academic Affairs at Seminole Junior College, Seminole, OK*

Richard Leeper *is Coordinator of Assessment at Seminole Junior College, Seminole, OK*

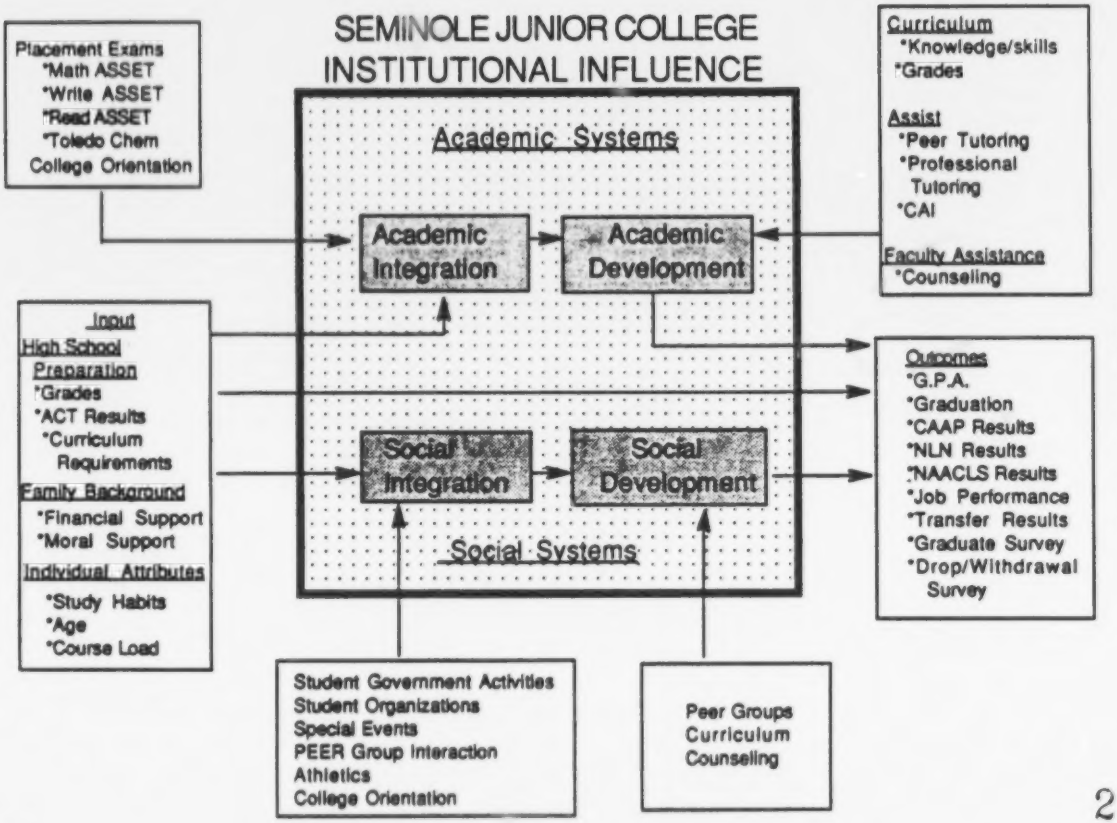

Figure 1. Conceptual Model

Total Quality Leadership and Participation at Rogers State College: A Development Model

Richard H. Mosier
James D. Hess

Introduction

The concept of Total Quality Management has made the initial transformation from business and industry to the public sector and has gained a significant foothold in the educational arena. While public higher education does not share the profit motive of the private sector, it has been recognized by many that educational institutions need to become increasingly responsive to their constituents or "customers." In an era where the public is demanding more from its educational institutions, many colleges and universities find themselves trapped between a traditional mission and the increasing level of expectation of those they propose to serve. Compounding this circumstance is the dwindling resource base available to institutions to meet constituent needs. All of these conditions have caused higher education entities to ask themselves the fundamental question, "Is the institution doing the right things...are we truly addressing the appropriate needs?"

The principles of Total Quality Management are designed to facilitate the transformation of laudable mission statements to a more practical accommodation of the needs of the customer base. While there is some consensus that TQM has a place in the higher education setting, little has been done to articulate specific models for TQM adaptation in the academic environment. This may be attributed in part to perceived or real barriers to TQM implementation. Winter (1991) noted that barriers to the application of TQM in higher education fall into two broad categories. These barriers may be classified as internal or specific to the organization such as tradition, culture, and infrastructure, and external, relating more to the TQM processes or principles themselves.

Winter concluded that the successful implementation of TQM in colleges and universities requires more than the learning of new problem-solving techniques. Rather, successful TQM

implementation requires a dramatic change in the way institutions function, defining academic outputs in terms of customer satisfaction. Additionally, Winter noted that it was imperative that one recognize the existing authority relationships between faculty and administration and the changes required in the roles of both groups.

Sherr and Lozier (1991) observed that TQM is not a passive descriptive term but an energetic activity of continuous improvement. They added that the key ingredients for continuous improvement are honesty, shared vision, patience, commitment, and TQM theory. Sherr and Lozier concluded that only TQM theory can be taught and learned. The remaining ingredients are intrinsic to the institution, dependent on the culture and value system present.

It is evident that the institutions themselves will determine whether TQM will be viewed historically as a catalyst for a paradigm shift in leadership or merely as a passing fad in institutional management. Increasingly, institutions have adopted the notion that successful implementation of TQM hinges upon the institution's ability to foster and develop a manageable and definitive process for the pursuit of quality on campus. While each institution's approach must be tailored to fit its own values, culture, and characteristics, it is important to have established frames of reference in the form of models adopted by other institutions. Certainly it is true that all institutions are unique; however, much can be learned from models previously implemented in similar settings.

Total Quality Leadership and Participation at Rogers State College

In the early fall of 1992 the President of Rogers State College led the members of the Rogers State College administration in a study of the administrative organization and procedures at Rogers State College with an eye towards change. The action was taken in response to a general dissatisfaction with "communications" on campus that had its root in the report of a doctoral study conducted with the endorsement of the President by a member of the Arts and Humanities faculty.

After two months of sometimes heated discussion and debate the principle underlying concept of TQM adapted to apply to an institution of higher education was identified as the model most likely to meet the needs and to ensure the future success of the institution. The essential idea that the practices, policies, and procedures of the college must be oriented to internal (students) and external customers was seen as a natural outgrowth of the college's long-acclaimed mission of service.

Because the President had, some years previously, articulated the star as the descriptive shape of the organization of Rogers State College and did not want to abandon the idea the new management program was titled Total Quality Leadership and Participation. The concept of the institution as a pulsating and active star having as its mass the intelligence, interests, skills and dedication of the members of the staff, each of whom on any given day could and should emerge on point as the leadership of one of the most visible rays (activities) for the day, supported in the effort to varying lengths and degrees of energy of the whole of the mass was

particularly well represented by the substitution of *Leadership and Participation* for the term *Management* in the lexicon of TQM.

To begin the implementation of the model the three Vice-presidents and the Assistant to the President were asked to identify the discrete operational activities of the total campus. Thirty-three such centers were identified. The supervisor of each operational center so identified was designated by the President as a Division Chairperson and invited to sit as a member of the Administrative Council. The Vice-president and Assistant to the President along with the President make up the Executive Council. Both Councils, chaired by the President, meet weekly. The agenda for the Administrative Council is established by the Executive Council. Immediately following each Administrative Council meeting each Vice-president and the Assistant to the President separately chair a "Focus Session" attended voluntarily by the members of the Administrative Council. The spheres of expertise of each member of the Executive Council are well known to each member of the Administrative Council and the agenda at each Focus Session is open. Issues that cannot be immediately handled by effective communication between the appropriate Division Chairpersons and the Executive Council member became items for the agenda at the Executive Council meeting and if needed at the next Administrative Council meeting.

Each team leader, (Division Chairperson) attended an all day workshop on TQM conducted by The Quality Alert Institute. The Division Director of Business and members of the faculty of that division agreed to become the lead agents in the implementation of the Total Quality Leadership and Participation Model and attended a three-day workshop in Florida to gain a deeper understanding of the model and reported their findings and conclusions to the entire faculty and staff at the Beginning-of-the-Year Workshop in July. These formal activities have been augmented by shared readings among the members of the Administrative Council.

What is a Quality Participant or Quality Team?

As the institution discussed the implementation of Total Quality Leadership and Participation, it became apparent that participants on campus were anxious to understand how quality would be defined and more importantly how it would be measured. Rather than adopting standardized evaluation forms, it was felt that statements of quality pursuit be adopted and allow team members and teams alike to identify their own quality goals and objectives. These statements were termed individualized development plans and team developments plans and focused on specific activities that would embrace continuous quality improvement within teams on campus. Within the academic arena, quality initiatives were developed for both instructional and non-instructional activities.

The quality pursuit statements that formed the basis of the individual and team development plans provide a description of the quality participant. These statements are designed to assist the quality teams and participants in measuring their progress and to focus team and individual activities. The following statements are examples of the quality pursuit statements around which teams developed specific objectives.

A Quality Participant...

- is well organized to perform his/her duties in a way that is economical. Participants of the highest quality continually strive to accomplish institutional and team goals at costs lower than previous levels.

- is an effective communicator and often suggests innovative and creative techniques to lower costs. Participants of the highest quality submit strategies for cost reduction to their team members for consideration.

- maintains a customer perspective. Participants of the highest quality review their team's efforts and objectives to be certain they are designed to increase customer satisfaction.

- reviews individual and team efforts to be certain that activities are directly tied to an institutional goal or objective. Participants of the highest quality outline specific efforts to achieve results toward established goals.

- applies appropriate technology to maximize efforts. Participants of the highest quality constantly review the application of technology to institutional functions and present these possibilities to their team members for review.

- continually evaluates program and service performance. Participants of the highest quality assess the effectiveness of programs and services and suggest to fellow team members areas for improvement, deletion, or development.

- participates in team behavior. Participants of the highest quality put the needs of the college and the team above their own needs.

As of July 10, 1992, each team member had completed a written individualized self-development plan focusing on the before mentioned quality initiatives. Based upon those plans the team leader (Division Chairperson) of each of the 33 divisions completed a team development plan and filed it along with the team leader's self-development plan with the President's office on July 21, 1992. All plans are based upon the Ideal Strategic Model for Rogers State College 1997. Thus all team development plans are designed so as to move the institution toward the accomplishment of its long-range goals.

The evaluation of the performance of the team leaders and each of the 33 teams as a unit is the responsibility of the Executive Council. The evaluation of the performance of each team member is the responsibility of the team leader (Division Chairperson) and is based on the teams' assessment of their accomplishment of or progress toward the quality initiatives identified in the team development plan.

In July of 1993, the entire process is scheduled to be evaluated and changed as needed for the 1993-94 academic year. This process of evaluation will be addressed utilizing the continuous quality improvement methodology, thereby reinforcing the participation cycle.

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Richard H. Mosier *is President of Rogers State College, Claremore, OK*

James D. Hess *is Vice President for Operations and Academics at Rogers State College, Claremore, OK*

Notes

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214